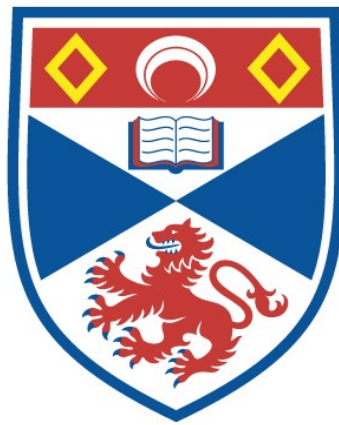


**CARLYLE AND RUSKIN :  
ASPECTS OF THE RELATIONSHIP OF THEIR  
THOUGHT**

John K. Speicher, Jr.

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD  
at the  
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CARLYLE AND RUSKIN:

Aspects of the Relationship of Their Thought

A thesis presented by  
John K. Speicher, Jr., B.A.,  
to the University of St. Andrews  
in application for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy



Th 5112

DECLARATION

I hereby certify that this thesis has been composed by me, is a record of work done by me, and has not previously been presented for a Higher Degree.

The research was carried out in the Department of English of St. Salvator's College, in the University of St. Andrews, under the supervision of Professor A. F. Falconer.

CERTIFICATE

I certify that John K. Speicher, Jr., B.A., has spent nine terms at research work in the Department of English of St. Salvator's College, University of St. Andrews, under my direction, that he has fulfilled the conditions of Ordinance No. 16 (St. Andrews), and that he is qualified to submit the accompanying thesis in application for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

CAREER

I first began my studies in 1951 at Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois, U.S.A., and after a year matriculated in Haverford College, Haverford, Pennsylvania, U.S.A. I subsequently studied English Literature and obtained the degree of Bachelor of Arts from Haverford College in June, 1955.

Following army duty, I commenced in October, 1957, the work reported in this thesis.

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## INTRODUCTION

Examined after as many as 160 years have passed, the initial reaction at the present time to the developments occurring from approximately 1800-1880 well may be incredulity at the ferment and excitement that they generated. The volume, alone, of material written by Dickens, Mill, Carlyle and Ruskin, for example, with implications of social, political and economic problems, is imposing. Just as impressive is the broad range of readers who studied the works of these authors; a large audience heterogeneous enough to include such men as the workers with whom Ruskin corresponded. The changes themselves, however, seen now as a part of an historical continuity, have lost the impact that they once possessed; yet it is important to remember that the immediate future of this period was then held to be, in its way, as perilous as that confronting the world now. In placing these years as a unit in an historical chain, the drastic change in the way of life from the years prior to the Industrial Revolution to the years of its activity is particularly clear. In a like manner, the problems of faith and belief which these changes forced upon a deeply rooted Puritan-Calvinist philosophy, the primary religious background outside the Church of England, are also evident.

From the beginning of the eighteen hundreds, Britain made vast strides in achieving the power and economic dominance which were to be unchallenged for a century. The initial industrialization of the seventeen fifties had so rapidly matured that the basic pattern of British manufacture had



altered by the start of the century. The railway, vanished as a novelty, was replacing the horse-drawn coach and, still more important, was revolutionizing shipping methods. Domestic prosperity was augmented by wealth flowing into Britain from a growing number of colonies throughout the world. Victoria came to rule over the richest and most powerful nation in the world.

In addition to the national economic benefits which it fathered, the Industrial Revolution, at the same time, fostered a new and distinct middle and upper class which was composed of industrialists and of the management obligatory to this manufacturing structure. These men and their families constituted, in addition, a newly educated, socially ambitious group that displayed an interest in literature and art; albeit, perhaps, with incentives differing from those of the aristocratic and scholarly classicists of the eighteenth century.

Viewed in retrospect, however, Britain also presented an unquiet background to the prosperous facade of the Empire. Despite the emergence of a growing group with newly acquired wealth, the number of poor remained proportionally large. The Industrial Revolution was accompanied by a movement toward urbanization which was vital for its success, yet which initiated problems of unforeseen seriousness. Slums, child labour, disease, discontent, and even starvation developed alongside national prosperity. At the same time, the ideology of the French Revolution had spread with sufficient popularity to alarm industrialists, educators, and landowners, as well

as the aristocracy. In this regard, the Chartist movement occasioned exceptionally grave anxiety for the stability of the existing order. Tariffs were revised in consideration to changing markets and each alteration brought strong protests from "injured" groups. The Corn Laws, their status, and their repeal were, in particular, a problem of fervent social, political and economic importance. The moral control maintained in rural communities by the church likewise suffered in the transition to city and factory life, while at all social levels, religious beliefs which were at least passively accepted by preceding generations underwent a thorough scrutiny and were often found inapplicable to the changed conditions.

The sum of these problems dims somewhat the lustre of the economic development characterizing the nineteenth century. In truth, the concept of national wealth remained as a questionable thickness of veneer overlying a less fortunate majority of the people.

In the midst of this swift-changing nation, two authors appeared who evinced a rare and sincere concern for the future of Britain and for a beneficence to the individual. These two, Thomas Carlyle and John Ruskin, were influential in guiding men toward an awareness of their need for personal goals and duties, while emphasizing the obligations of the individual to those with whom he lived. They strove to condition a segment of the nation to adapt morally and spiritually to the effects of change, growth, and industrialization

through a transformation of generally realized but increasingly less practiced traditional values and beliefs.

The backgrounds of both Carlyle and Ruskin reveal features which help to explain their reactions to the period, and the philosophies of which they were advocates. Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881) became an eminent figure in nineteenth century Britain almost, one could say, in spite of his philosophical background rather than because of it. Raised in a poor Scottish family of fervent Calvinists, he developed into a representative of the diminishing class which, in the face of a rapidly altering society, was imbued with firm convictions and unshakable religious faith. Carlyle's "spiritual autobiography", Sartor Resartus, reveals, of course his struggle to determine and understand the foundation of his belief. The final resolution of these doubts, described in "The Everlasting Yea", constituted, too, the tenets of the religious philosophy which both sustained him throughout his life and underlay all his writing. German literature and philosophy, through which by his translations Carlyle first became known in Britain, augmented in principle (and with Goethe, in particular) his stern beliefs which already were clashing with the progress of this industrial age.

John Ruskin (1819-1900) was, from superficial appearances, raised in a vastly different atmosphere from that in which Carlyle emerged. As the only child of a prosperous London wine merchant, he first was carefully nurtured at home and then was educated at Oxford as a gentleman-commoner at Christ

Church. His education was further broadened by numerous and often lengthy excursions throughout Britain and the Continent, while the encouragement and assistance of his parents aided in developing his artistic and literary abilities, and allowed him to publish his early work. Yet despite the evident cultural and social gulf which separated the background of Ruskin from that of Carlyle, common factors in the lives of both men did exist which would enable Ruskin to establish an initial sympathy with Carlyle. In Ruskin, too, was bred the Scottish heritage which was so dominant in Carlyle's character and which included a similar religious background from the Scottish church.

That Carlyle and Ruskin established a friendship is unquestioned; nevertheless, the final extent to which this companionship might have been based upon the mutuality of their beliefs, in contrast to background alone, is a question for major consideration. At the same time, the degree of influence upon Ruskin by Carlyle is also a feature of closely related interest. Both men were vitally concerned with the problems of their era, and both often emphasized historical contrast to illustrate the troubles of the present and the absence of these problems in the past; yet did they work from basically identical ideas of causes and with similar plans for solutions? These factors constitute the major questions in this study which will examine aspects in the relationship of the thoughts of Carlyle and Ruskin. The final goal of this work is to compare more precisely several re-

lated beliefs of Carlyle and Ruskin, and, consequently, to interpret more clearly the personal and philosophic relationship which existed between these two men.

The thesis is divided into three major sections which comprise a number of discordant evaluations of this relationship. First to be noted are the comments of each author on the other, as found in their works, letters and conversations. Secondly, contemporary and modern critics are examined to determine the range in their interpretations of this problem and to uncover the unanimity of opinion which might exist. Thirdly, the works of Carlyle and Ruskin are accepted as the definitive source for discovering their concepts of religion, industrialism, the role of the individual, happiness, government, and work. Their philosophies as expressed in these writings are given the prime role in a final analysis of the scope of aspects of their relationship.



## Chapter I

RUSKIN'S RELATIONSHIP WITH CARLYLE

In the summer of 1841, during one of his frequent visits to Switzerland, Ruskin noted in his diary: "Read some of Carlyle's lectures. Bombast I think; altogether approves of Mahomet, and talks like a girl of his 'black eyes'".<sup>1</sup> The same day (6th June), Ruskin also wrote to his friend W. H. Harrison using very similar language:

We feel excessively hermit-like and innocent with respect to all literary matters here, being only able to get an occasional Athenaeum or Atlas to bring us up. What are these Carlyle lectures? People are making a fuss about them, and from what I see in the reviews, they seem absolute bombast - taking bombast, I suppose, making everybody think himself a hero, and deserving of 'your wash-up', at least, from the reverential Mr. Carlyle. Do you remember the Sketches by Boz - there is a passage quoted by the Atlas as 'brilliant', every sentence beginning with 'What', between which and the dinner lecture of Horatio Sparkins, Esq., beginning 'We feel - we know - that we exist - nothing more - what more' - there exists a very strong parallel.<sup>2</sup>

Despite this early critical tone, Ruskin did, of course, read the works of Carlyle. In 1881, he wrote to George Richmond and credited him with being the first to place a book of Carlyle's in his hand.<sup>3</sup> This may well have been

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<sup>1</sup> Joan Evans, and John H. Whitehouse, editors, The Diaries of John Ruskin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1956), 1, p. 199.

<sup>2</sup> E. T. Cook and Alexander Wedderburn, editors, The Works of John Ruskin (London: George Allen, 1903-12, XXXVI, Letters, p. 25. This edition is hereafter referred to as Works.

<sup>3</sup> Letter to George Richmond from Brantwood (Feb. 1881): "Please believe in my constant love for you - and sorrow, just now, not for Carlyle, but for you who live, not him who is dead - (and behold they are alive forevermore - Amen) - but, do you know you were the first person who ever put a book of Carlyle's into my hand?". Works, XXXVII, p. 341.

Past and Present which was published in 1843, for in another letter to Richmond in 1881, Ruskin, citing the great personal value of the book, suggests that he was forced into reading it:

Oh me! do you recollect when you first made me read Past and Present? It was the only book I could get help from during my illness, which was partly brought on by the sense of loneliness - and greater responsibility brought upon me by Carlyle's death.<sup>4</sup>

The early and most unfavourable opinion underwent a definite revision by 1851 when Ruskin, writing to his father, said:

My dearest Father, I had yesterday your nice letter of the 2nd from Dover with enclosed review of Carlyle - Mr. Huggins on Pre-Raphaelites, etc. Carlyle must be losing his senses - but what grand madness, too - The Times (a criticism of The Life of John Sterling appeared in the Times on November 1, 1851) is excellent, and moderate - and it seems to me just, but the bits of Carlyle are capital, too. The Archaeological and Architectural Society must be verily what Mr. Carlyle calls "Bottled Moonshine".<sup>5</sup>

At approximately the same time (about 1851), Ruskin had managed to overcome his aversion to German Culture to the point where, regarding Carlyle, he could write to W. J. Stillman: "You should read much, and generally old books; but above all avoid German Books, - and all Germanists except Carlyle, whom read as much as you can or like."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 361.

<sup>5</sup>John Lewis Bradley, editor, Ruskin's Letters from Venice, 1851-1852 (New Haven: Yale Studies in English, n.d.), Vol. 129, p. 55.

<sup>6</sup>Works, XXXVI, Letters, pp. 123-4.

The changed judgment evolved through ten formative years during which Ruskin gained fame and authority as the author of Modern Painters and The Seven Lamps of Architecture; and entered into religious controversy with Notes on the Construction of Sheepfolds.

In the same decade, Carlyle was achieving great eminence, in contrast to the hitherto limited esteem in which he had been received. We may presume that Ruskin, endowed with intellectual inquisitiveness, followed this rise with heightening interest, both in the man and in his writings. The interest culminated in a meeting which took place sometime within this period:

The first actual glimpse that we have of the two men together, however, despite circumstantial evidence suggesting earlier meetings, dates in early July 1850. On 6 July John Welsh, son of Mrs. Carlyle's Uncle George, wrote in his journal that he had recently seen Ruskin and his pretty wife at the Carlyle's and that Ruskin had tried hard to draw out Carlyle's views on religion... Ruskin's diaries do not reveal a meeting earlier than the summer of 1850. The first letter from Carlyle to Ruskin dates after 1850.<sup>7</sup>

From this time on, a growing enthusiasm and discipleship to Carlyle was evident in the writings and letters of Ruskin. For approximately the next thirty years, excluding the unfortunate disagreement over Carlyle's statement on

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<sup>7</sup> Charles Richmond Sanders, "Carlyle's Letters to Ruskin: A Finding List With Some Unpublished Letters and Comments", Bulletin of John Rylands Library Manchester, 41:1, September, 1958, pp. 208-9.



molestation by London inhabitants, Ruskin acknowledged almost perfect harmony with his "Master". Indeed, even after the death of Carlyle, there was a recognized degree of influence; influence which was, at any rate, emphasized by Ruskin and interrupted only by complaints of a sick man. This was developed to the point where Cook can state:

Of course, neither in the case of Ruskin's practical suggestions nor in that of his economic theories, are any patent rights or any exclusive credit to be claimed for him. He himself never made such claims. He was only a disciple, he said, of his 'master' Carlyle; he was 'not a discoverer',<sup>8</sup> he was only a learner from Plato and Xenophon.

The emphasis of this chapter, therefore, will be on Ruskin's stated acknowledgments to Carlyle, both in his letters and his writings, with the addition of the few dissensions mentioned by Ruskin. The variance between this personal opinion and the philosophical content of his works in relation to Carlyle's will be examined in a further section.

In the early eighteen fifties, two important references were made to Carlyle in Ruskin's books. First, in Notes on the Construction of Sheepfolds (1851), Ruskin endorsed Carlyle's belief in the value of action or work. This tenet is one of the strongest themes running continually through the works of both men. In discussing religion, Ruskin said:

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<sup>8</sup>E. T. Cook, The Life of John Ruskin (London: George Allen, 1912), II, pp. 576-7.

...without seeking, truth cannot be known at all; and that, by seeking, it may be discovered by the simplest ....It can neither be declared from pulpits, not set down in Articles, nor in any wise 'prepared and sold' in packages, ready for us.... There are doubts in this matter which evil spirits darken with their wings, and that is true of all such doubts which we were told long ago - they can 'be ended' by action alone'. (Carlyle, Past and Present, Chapter XI).<sup>9</sup>

Second, Ruskin voiced a basic disagreement which was to be iterated throughout his life. One aspect of this divergence was shown when Ruskin spoke of the role of a builder in The Stones of Venice:

He may be merely what Mr. Carlyle rightly calls a human beaver after all; and there may be nothing in all that ingenuity of his greater than a complication of animal faculties, an intricate beastiality, - nest or hive building in its highest development. You need something more than this or the man is despicable; you need that virtue of building through which he may show his affections and delights; you need its beauty or decoration.<sup>10</sup>

Despite the statement of basic acceptance of Carlyle's creed of work, Ruskin also emphasized that he was unable to accept the lack of a right of happiness and reward which accompanied it. This is put most clearly in a letter to his father which deals with religion:

But I have found that the other road will not do for me - that there is no happiness - and no strength in it; I cannot understand the make of minds that can do without a hope of the future: Carlyle for instance is continually enforcing the necessity of being virtuous and enduring all pain and self denial, without any hope of reward. I do not find myself in the least able to do this: I am too mean - or too selfish; and I find that vexations and labours would break me down, unless

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<sup>9</sup>Works, XII, Notes on the Construction of Sheepfolds, p.542.  
<sup>10</sup>Works, IX, The Stones of Venice, p. 67.

I could look forward to a 'crown of rejoicing'.<sup>11</sup>

The next few years showed Carlyle's increasing sphere of influence on Ruskin. That this fact was certainly obvious at the time is shown by Joan Evans' illustration in John Ruskin:

A cloud had arisen between them a short time before because a critic had accused Ruskin of plagiarizing some of Carlyle's ideas. Now, however, he had need of people who did not disapprove of him, and wrote to Carlyle 23 Jan 1855 to clear up the matter of plagiarism; 'People are continually accusing me of borrowing other men's thoughts and not confessing the obligation. I don't think there is anything of which I am more utterly incapable than this meanness; but it is very difficult always to know how much one is indebted to other people, and it is always most difficult to explain to others the degree in which a stronger mind may guide you, without your having, at least intentionally, borrowed this or the other definite thought. The fact is, it is very possible for two people to hit sometimes on the same thought, and I have over and over again been somewhat vexed as well as surprised that what I really had, and knew I had, worked out for myself, corresponded very closely to things that you had said much better'.<sup>12</sup>

This same letter continues:

I entreat you not to think when (if you ever have patience to do so) you glance at anything I write - and when you come, as you must sometimes, on bits that look like bits of yourself spoiled - to think that I have been mean enough to borrow from you knowingly, and without acknowledgment. How much your general influence has told upon me, I know not, but I always confess it, or rather boast of it, in

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<sup>11</sup>Bradley, op. cit., p. 247.

<sup>12</sup>Joan Evans, John Ruskin (London: Jonathan Cape, 1954), pp. 206-7.

conversation about you, and you will see what - considering the way malicious people catch at such confessions - is certainly a very frank one, at the close of the lecture of which I send you a Builder containing a report.<sup>13</sup>

Reflecting this same criticism, the third volume of Modern Painters which was published in 1856 contained, among the appendices, one dealing specifically with plagiarism. It said, in part:

On the other hand, I should be very sorry if I had not been continually taught and influenced by the writers whom I love; and am quite unable to say to what extent my thoughts have been guided by Wordsworth, Carlyle and Helps; to whom (with Dante and George Herbert, in olden time) I owe more than to any other writers; - most of all, perhaps, to Carlyle, whom I read so constantly, that, without wilfully setting myself to imitate him, I find myself perpetually falling into his modes of expression, and saying many things in a 'quite other', and I hope, stronger, way, than I should have adopted some years ago; as also there are things which I hope are said more clearly and simply than before, owing to the influence upon me of the beautiful quiet English of Helps....There is all the difference in the world between this receiving of guidance, or allowing of influence, and wilful imitation, much more plagiarism; nay, the guidance may even innocently reach into local tones of thought, and must do so to some extent; so that I find Carlyle's stronger thinking colouring mine continually; and should be very sorry if I did not; Otherwise I should have read him to little purpose.<sup>14</sup>

Although he denied wilful imitation in reference to content, Ruskin vouched, at least, for seeking a stylistic influence, as Cook has quoted in Studies in Ruskin regarding Volume I of Modern Painters: "I am ashamed now of the

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<sup>13</sup>Works, XXXVI, Letters, p. 184.

<sup>14</sup>Works, V, Modern Painters, pp. 427-8.



affected style of the volume. Subsequently I read Carlyle, and succeeded in catching something of his rhythm".<sup>15</sup>

On the other hand, however, when writing to his father in 1861, Ruskin found it necessary to minimize current outside influences:

I'm very glad you like Emerson. Mamma has a horror of these people - Carlyle, etc.- because she thinks they 'pervert' me; but I never understand them till I find the thing out for myself. After ten year's hard work I find out that every man does his best thing easiest' Quote from Emerson. Then I find the brief sentence in Emerson and am pleased: but he does not teach it to me.<sup>16</sup>

The strongest and almost undiluted praise of Carlyle, then, came in the multitude of books and lectures from the eighteen fifties to the eighteen seventies, displayed with

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<sup>15</sup>E. T. Cook, Studies in Ruskin (Sunnyside: George Allen, 1891), p. 208.

<sup>16</sup>Works, XXXVI, Letters, p. 396. The same reassurance is given to his father in a letter from Winton, Dec. 15, 1863: "It is really very hard upon you that my courses of thought have now led me out of the way of fame - and into that of suffering - for it is a dark world enough toward the close of life, with my creed. One thing, however, I wish you could put out of your mind - that either Carlyle, Colenso, or Froude, much less anyone less than they, have had the smallest share in this change. Three years ago, long before Colenso was heard of, I had definitely refused to have anything more to do with the religious teaching in this school: my promises to Mrs. La Touche would never had been made if I had thought it likely any such stir would be caused thus early, as Colenso has excited, but I was then far beyond the point at which he is standing now. Alas, I cannot build churches." - Works, XXVI, p. 460.

what sometimes seems an almost embarrassing idolatry. In Volume III of *Modern Painters* (1856), Ruskin spoke the famous phrase of the "pure lightning of Carlyle",<sup>17</sup> and when discussing religion noted that "Our earnest poets, and deepest thinkers, are doubtful and indignant, (Tennyson, Carlyle)".<sup>18</sup> In the same volume, he also praised Carlyle by saying:

Therefore, finding the world of literature more or less divided into Thinkers and Seers, I believe we shall find also that the Seers are wholly the greater race of the two. A true Thinker, who has practical purpose in his thinking, and is sincere, as Plato, or Carlyle, or Helps, becomes in some sort a seer, and must be always of infinite use in his generation.<sup>19</sup>

This idea of Carlyle as a seer became increasingly popular and is still used as a critical description of his function as a nineteenth century author.

The following year, in an Appendix to The Elements of Drawing, Ruskin showed how important the writings of Carlyle were to himself, and at the same time, subtly defended Carlyle from the criticism of misunderstanding readers:

Carlyle is hardly to be named as a writer for 'beginners', because his teaching, though to some of us vitally necessary, may to others be hurtful. If you understand and like him, read him; if he offends you, you are not yet ready for him, and perhaps may never be so; at all events, give him up, as you would sea-bathing if you found it hurt you, till you are stronger.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>Works, V, Modern Painters, p. 223.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 323.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 333-334.

<sup>20</sup>Works, XV, The Elements of Drawing, p. 227.

Not only did Ruskin praise Carlyle, but he came close to depreciating his own writings in doing so. In The Two Paths (1859), he wrote that:

No description that I have ever given of anything is worth four lines of Tennyson; and in serious thought, my half-pages are generally only worth about as much as a single sentence either of his, or of Carlyle's.<sup>21</sup>

A note of Ruskin's sentence lengths might provoke some thought as to the fullness of this praise. In a letter two years later, Ruskin, in speaking of a book of his own excerpts, says that as Carlyle says the excerpts are good, he has not a word to say against them.<sup>22</sup> More serious and fuller praise comes in a letter to Mr. and Mrs. Carlyle:

Christmas Evening (not Eve), '62....I've been reading Latter Days again, chiefly "Jesuitism". I can't think what Mr. Carlyle wants me to write anything more for - if people don't attend to that, what more is to be said?<sup>23</sup>

The year 1860 has often been called a major turning point in Ruskin's life, and it truly was a time of both climax and beginning. Ruskin, famous and respected as an art critic, had reached his zenith of popularity with the

<sup>21</sup>Works, XVI, The Two Paths, p. 416.

<sup>22</sup>E. T. Cook, The Life of John Ruskin, II, p. 42.

<sup>23</sup>Works, XXXVI, Letters, p. 428. Ruskin was led by Carlyle in some less than philosophic matter according to a letter to Mr. Scott, 7 Oct 1864: "I did not reply to your kind letter because I had not - nor have I yet received any official requests respecting the Melbourne Shakespeare Memorial. If Carlyle acts, I will - if he don't - I won't - but I had an opportunity of recommending a friend to look up Mr. Lusschild's work the very day your letter came, and hope to look at it soon myself." - John H. Whitehouse, editor, Solitary Warrior (London: George Allen, 1929), p. 60.

educated middle and upper classes. Yet for him, it was also a year of beginning through the appearance of Unto This Last, the first of the radical political writings which were to incur such derision and criticism. The hostility with which these were met, coupled with the tragic events of his personal life, mainly in regard to the approach to "brain-fever" and to Rose La Touche, made the following twenty years particularly unhappy for Ruskin. Carlyle was a positive element in his life, one who, faced with the emotionalism, vagaries and instability of Ruskin's nature, remained himself unswerving in principle and a staunch, although not uncritical, friend. Such an ally was invaluable, as Ruskin had already realized when he dedicated Munera Pulveris: "I inscribed the first volume of this series to the friend who aided me in chief sorrow. Let me inscribe the second to the friend and guide who has urged me to all chief labour, Thomas Carlyle."<sup>24</sup>

The unanimity with Carlyle during these years was almost unbroken; a unanimity in all areas, including, surprisingly, that of art. There were only a very few discords, as, for example, a matter of degree in the victory of right over wrong as discussed in Time and Tide:

It is true, of course, that, in the end of ends, nothing but the right conquers: the prevalent thorns of wrong, at last, crackle away in indiscriminate flame: and of the good seed sown, one grain in a thousand, at last, verily comes up--and somebody lives by it; but most of our great teachers, not excepting Carlyle and Emerson themselves, are a little too encouraging in their

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<sup>24</sup>Works, XVII, Munera Pulveris, p. 145.



proclamation of this comfort, not, to my mind, very sufficient, when for the present our fields are full of nothing but darnel instead of wheat, and cockle instead of barley; and none of them seem to me yet to have enough insisted on the inevitable power and infectiousness of all evil, and the easy and utter extinguishableness of good.<sup>25</sup>

Despite Carlyle's acknowledged dislike of art and his general misunderstanding of its value and function, Ruskin managed to agree with him at least in part. In the Lectures on Art, given at Oxford during Hilary Term, 1870, Ruskin praised Frederick and Carlyle, and stated that Carlyle too truly:

...accuses the genius of past art...(for) 'no likeness at all, of the noble series of Human Realities, or of any part of them, who have sprung, not from the idle brains of dreaming dilettanti, but from the head of God Almighty, to make this poor authentic earth a little memorable for us, and to do a little work that may be eternal there'.<sup>26</sup>

Beyond the primarily political and philosophical works, Ruskin was enthusiastic also about the histories of

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<sup>25</sup>Works, XVII, Time and Tide, p. 374, Ruskin makes another minor criticism of Carlyle in a slightly similar connection in a footnote in Fors Clavigera where he disagrees with Carlyle on the Turkish problem: "I do not venture to speak of the general statements of my Master Carlyle's letter; but it seemed to me to dwell too much on the idea of total destruction to the Turk, and to involve considerations respecting the character of the Turk and Russian not properly bearing on the business. It is not surely, 'the Eastern Question' whether Turkey shall exist, or Russia triumph, but whether we shall or shall not stop a man in a turban from murdering a Christian." - Works, XXIX, Fors Clavigera, p. 61.

<sup>26</sup>Works, XX, Lectures on Art, p. 106.

Carlyle. The comments made by Ruskin in regard to these are interesting, for they illustrate the erratic slant and the slight change in meaning which Ruskin so frequently made when discussing the same topic at different times. Roe noted that "The French Revolution and the Frederick the Great were to him 'immortal' work done by 'the greatest of historians since Tacitus'. 'All of your work is grandly done', he told Carlyle in 1871."<sup>27</sup> This high opinion is supplemented by a letter from Ruskin to Arthur Severn, written two years later, in which he says:

Please note also Carlyle's language is of no consequence (Footnote says: "Mr. Severn had mentioned in a letter that he had been reading Alison's account of the French Revolution"). There is no historian but Carlyle of the French Revolution or of the English one. All the others give you an utterly false impression.<sup>28</sup>

However, in the lecture notes of 'History, Written and Painted', comprising in part the Oxford lectures of 1875 on Sir Joshua Reynolds, Ruskin assumed a viewpoint a degree more critical toward the French Revolution:

I only know four bits of perfect history in the English language - Shakespeare's Coriolanus, King John, Richard the Second, Henry the Fourth. In modern days in English there are only two pieces of history yet extant - Carlyle's Cromwell and Frederick. His French Revolution is next to them, but he had not sympathy enough with the French mind. Of other history there is as yet none.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>27</sup>Frederick W. Roe, The Social Philosophy of Carlyle and Ruskin (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1921), p. 144.

<sup>28</sup>Works, XXXVII, Letters, p. 63.

<sup>29</sup>Works, XXII, p. 500.

Throughout the eighteen seventies, Ruskin showed a touching attitude toward Carlyle which is at times even pathetic. It was the attitude of the devoted disciple, the misunderstood writer, and the lonely man. This study will not attempt to give here any full explanation of Ruskin's mental or psychological condition which is obviously most complex and, in relation to his writing, open to much controversy. However, some knowledge of his health and outlook is necessary to understand the spirit of his letters to Carlyle at this time. In contrast to clinical analysis or complete ignoring of the problem, Joan Evans' explanation of Ruskin's condition, in particular reference to the early months of 1869, is both rational and calm. She states:

Such feverish activity, indeed, was in him no good sign, and in some ways he was going down hill fast. In the preface to The Queen of the Air, dated at Vevey on May 1st, he writes, 'My days and strength have lately been much broken... This first day of May 1869, I am writing where my work was begun thirty-five years ago, within sight of the snows of the higher Alps. In that half of the permitted life of man, I have seen strange evil brought upon every scene that I best loved or tried to make beloved by others. The light which once flushed those pale summits with its rose at dawn, and purple at sunset, is now umbered and faint, the air which once inlaid the clefts of all their golden crags with azure is now defiled with languid coils of smoke, belched from worse than volcanic fires; their very glacier waves are ebbing and their snows fading, as if Hell had breathed on them; the waters that once sank at their feet into crystalline rest are now dimmed and foul, from deep to deep, and from shore to shore.'

This delusion of storm-cloud was to haunt him for years: it expressed all the change that

he found in familiar scenes that could no longer give him, as they once had done, the lyric happiness of youth. Sometimes, no doubt, in London or in Midland England, there might indeed be casual smoke to dim the sunlight; but in fact the smoke-cloud was no real thing but an image of the illness that dimmed his mind.<sup>30</sup>

On the same day as he wrote the preface to The Queen of the Air, Ruskin wrote an equally moody letter to Carlyle crediting him with help and influence: "I have the Sartor with me also - it belongs to me now, more than any other of your books. I have nearly all my clothes to make - fresh, but more shroud shape than any other."<sup>31</sup> Exactly two years later (1st May 1871), and in answer to a letter of Carlyle's, Ruskin replied with unchanged feelings of devotion and gratitude:

I am deeply thankful to have your letter on this day itself. I think the great help it gives me is not so much in the actual encouragement, great as that is, as in the pleasure of giving you pleasure, and knowing that you accept what I am doing as the fulfilment, so far as in me is, of what you have taught me.<sup>32</sup>

Ruskin's value of the friendship of Carlyle as, for one instance, during a period of great sorrow and loneliness was brought out in a letter to Dr. John Brown, to which Cook appends the comment that it contains "Sage advice, which Ruskin was in his own case abundantly to ignore."<sup>33</sup>

<sup>30</sup> Joan Evans, John Ruskin, p. 307.

<sup>31</sup> Works, XXXVI, Letters, p. 565.

<sup>32</sup> Works, XXXVII, Letters, pp. 30-1.

<sup>33</sup> E. T. Cook, The Life of John Ruskin, II, p. 243.

Herne Hill, 29th Dec., 1873. - Dearest Dr. Brown,-  
Your letters are so helpful to me, you can't think,  
for I am more alone now in the gist of me than ever,  
only Carlyle and you with me in sympathy...and all  
that I had of preciousness utterly gone, mother,  
nurse, and just afterwards, in a very terrible way,  
what I thought I should never have lost. Then this  
battle with the dragon is far more close and fear-  
ful than I conceived. Turner only knew quite what  
it was....Don't write a word that tires you, to me,  
or anybody....<sup>34</sup>

Ruskin, in the following year, made a lengthy visit  
to the continent where, after a period of depression, he  
wrote extensively and, especially with the Franciscans at  
Assisi, thought seriously about his religious beliefs; in-  
deed, he approached turning to the Roman Church.<sup>35</sup> Among  
his letters to Carlyle during this period, two particularly  
show his concern with religious problems and appeal for a  
fuller explanation of Carlyle's own religious philosophy  
than was expressed in his books. The first, dated from  
Assisi, June 24th, 1874, said:

...But it seems to me there are some subjects of  
thought, connected with your own past work,  
which such too sorrowful leisure might neverthe-  
less be grandly spent in. None of your readers,  
I believe - none even of the most careful -  
know precisely, in anything like practical  
approximation, what sympathy you have with the  
faith of Abbot Samson, or St. Adalbert; I don't  
know myself. To me, the question of their faith  
is a terrible mystery, but one which I am sure  
is to be solved; - I mean that we shall either  
live up to Christianity, or refuse it. But I  
don't know what your own inner thoughts are of  
the faith, such as you have told me of in your  
mother, and such as so many noble souls have had  
in Scotland.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Loc. cit.

<sup>35</sup> Joan Evans, John Ruskin, pp. 347-350.

<sup>36</sup> Works, XXXVII, Letters, pp. 115-116.



The second letter is a more definite appeal for guidance in basic beliefs of any kind, not necessarily Catholic or Christian, and shows an interesting comparison that Ruskin drew between himself and Friedrich. It was sent from the Sacristan's Cell at Assisi:

....You have perfectly shown the value of sincerity in any faith moderately concurrent with the laws of nature and humanity. Faith in Allah - or Jupiter - or Christ.

You have also shown the power of living without any faith - in charity and utility - as Friedrich.

And what you say of Friedrich's sorrowful surroundings and impossibilities of believing anything is to me the most precious passage of the whole book (Book xxi; Chapt ix) - many though there be - priceless.

But you don't say what you would have Friedrich be. You don't say what a Master ought now to teach his pupils to believe, or at least wish them to believe.

And this, remember, is now quite a vital and practical question for me at Oxford.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid., pp.118-119. The reference to Friedrich given in brackets was made by Cook and Wedderburn. The following quotation must be at least in part the passage of reference: "He well knew himself to be dying; but some think, expected that the end might be a little farther off. There is a grand simplicity of stoicism in him; coming as if by nature, or by long second-nature; finely unconscious of itself, and finding nothing of peculiar in this new trial laid on it. From of old, Life has been infinitely contemptible to him. In death, I think, he has neither fear nor hope. Atheism, truly, he never could abide: to him, as to all of us, it was flatly inconceivable that intellect, moral emotion, could have been put into him by an Entity that had none of its own. But there, pretty much, his Theism seems to have stopped. Instinctively, too, he believed, no man more firmly, that Right alone has ultimately any strength in this world: ultimately, yes; - but for him and his poor brief interests, what good was it? Hope for himself in Divine Justice, in Divine Providence, I think he had not practically any; that the unfathomable Demiurgus should concern himself with such a set of paltry ill-given animalcules as oneself and mankind are, this also, as we have often noticed, is in the main incredible to him.

The year 1871 inaugurated a new and, in importance, last sphere of Ruskin's work. The series of letters, Fors Clavigera and the consequent development of the St. George's Guild represent the culmination and the blighted fruition of Ruskin's beliefs and ideals concerning political economy. The "Letters to the Workmen and Labourers of Great Britain" appeared first monthly for seven years and then periodically until 1884. Covering a multitude of subjects including painting, literature, sculpture and religion, they were primarily intended for political and economic reform. This basic purpose can be discerned in the first letter, in which Ruskin said:

We begin to-day another group of ten years, not in happy circumstances. Although, for the time, exempted from the direct calamities which have

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"A sad Creed, this of the King's;--he had to do his duty without fee or reward. Yes, reader;--and what is well worth your attention, you will have difficulty to find, in the annals of any Creed, a King or man who stood more faithfully to his duty; and, till the last hour, alone concerned himself with doing that. To poor Friedrich that was all the Law and all the Prophets: and I much recommend you to surpass him, if you, by good luck, have a better Copy of those inestimable Documents! - Inarticulate notions, fancies, transient aspirations, he might have, in the background of his mind. One day, sitting for a while out of doors, gazing into the Sun, he was heard to murmur, "Perhaps I shall be nearer thee soon:" - and indeed nobody knows what his thoughts were in these final months. There is traceable only a complete superiority to Fear and Hope; in parts, too, are half-glimpses of a great motionless interior lake of Sorrow, sadder than any tears or complainings, which are altogether wanting to it."

Thomas Carlyle, History of Friedrich II. of Prussia called Frederick the Great, Volume X, pp. 186-7. Unless otherwise noted, the works of Carlyle cited hereafter are from the People's Edition of Thomas Carlyle's Works (London: Chapman and Hall, 1871-1874).

fallen on neighbouring states, believe me, we have not escaped them because of our better deservings, not by our better wisdom; but only for one of two bad reasons, or for both: either that we have not sense enough to determine in a great national quarrel which side is right, or that we have not courage to defend the right, when we have discerned it....

They (foreign states) have no right to complain of us, notwithstanding, since we have all, lately, lived ourselves in the daily endeavour to get as much out of our neighbours and friends as we could; and having by this means, indeed, got a good deal out of each other, and put nothing into each other, the actually obtained result, this day, is a state of emptiness in purse and stomach, for the solace of which our boasted 'insular position' is ineffectual....

Therefore, as I have said, I will endure it no longer quietly; but henceforward, with any few or many who will help, do my poor best to abate this misery. But that I may do my best, I must not be miserable myself any longer; for no man who is wretched in his own heart, and feeble in his own work, can rightly help others.<sup>38</sup>

The huge task, therefore, was to be the practical goal of Ruskin's remaining years. In this effort too, we can see most vividly the acknowledged influence of Carlyle.

Cook emphasizes the closeness of thought between the two and gives examples of Ruskin's direct recognition of Carlyle's influence:

...The criticism of the nineteenth century which runs through the book from its first page to the last is deeply coloured by the influence of Carlyle. Ruskin in one Letter speaks of his work in Fors Clavigera as being done 'with only one man in England - Thomas Carlyle - to whom I can look for steady guidance.'<sup>39</sup> The opening passage of the book,

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<sup>38</sup>Works, XXVII, Fors Clavigera, pp. 11-13

<sup>39</sup>This actually refers more particularly to the formation of the St. George's Guild. The sentence quoted read



in which, 'looking down from Ingleborough', Ruskin describes England as sunk in 'misery and beggary', recalls - and, I doubt not, was meant to recall - the words with which Carlyle, thirty years before, opened his Past and Present.<sup>40</sup>

In Fors, Ruskin both lauded and interpreted Carlyle while developing his own theories of economics, and to support these beliefs, he gave Carlyle unstinted praise. Carlyle and he were fundamentally in agreement, according to Ruskin, on the faults and problems of England, and Carlyle was the great master. In one of the early Letters (X, 1871), he declared to his readers:

A good law is one that holds, whether you recognize and pronounce it or not; a bad law is one that cannot hold, however much you ordain and pronounce it. That is the mighty truth which Carlyle has been telling you for a quarter of a century - once for all he told it you, and the landowners, and all whom it concerns, in the third book of Past and Present (....), and from that day to this, whatever there is in England of dullest and insolentest may be always known by the natural instinct it has to howl against Carlyle.... Now, I tell you once for all, Carlyle is the only living writer who has spoken the absolute and perpetual truth about yourselves and your business; and exactly in proportion to the inherent weakness of brain in your lying guides, will be their animosity against Carlyle.... Read you Carlyle, then with all your heart, and with the best of brain you can give; and you will learn from him first, the eternity of good law, and the need of obedience to it: then, concerning your own immediate business, you will learn farther this, that the beginning of all good law, and nearly the end of it, is in these

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in full: "That it should be left to me to begin such a work, with only one man in England - Thomas Carlyle - to whom I can look for steady guidance, is alike wonderful and sorrowful to me."

<sup>40</sup>E. T. Cook, The Life of John Ruskin, II, pp. 320-321.

ordinances, - That every man shall do good work for his bread; and secondly, That every man shall have good bread for his work. But the first of these is the only one you have to think of. If you are resolved that the work shall be good, the bread will be sure; if not, - believe me, there is neither steam plow nor steam mill, go they never so glibly, that will win it from the earth long, either for you, or the Ideal Landed Proprietor.<sup>41</sup>

Three months later, Ruskin strongly defended and explained Carlyle's concept of force, using this interpretation to support his own point of view; a belief, however, not perfectly superimposed upon that of Carlyle:

Ever since Carlyle wrote that sentence about rights and might, in his "French Revolution", all blockheads of a benevolent class have been declaiming against him, as a worshipper of force. What else, in the name of the three Magis, is to be worshipped? Force of brains, Force of heart, Force of hand: - will you dethrone these, and worship apoplexy? - despise the spirit of Heaven, and worship phthisis? Every condition of idolatry is summed in the one broach wickedness of refusing to worship Force, and resolving to worship No-Force; - denying the Almighty, and bowing down to four-and-twopence with a stamp on it.

But Carlyle never meant in that place to refer you to such final truth. He meant but to tell you that before you dispute about what you should get, you would do well to find out first what is to be gotten. Which briefly is, for everybody, at last, their deserts, and no more.<sup>42</sup>

In a note to Letter 44, two years later, Ruskin called attention to a letter he had received on the warning of Carlyle concerning British industry which demonstrated how

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<sup>41</sup>Works, XXVII, Fors Clavigera, pp. 179-180.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., p. 230.

correct Carlyle had been in his prediction. Here again, in his agreement with this letter, Ruskin was not merely crediting Carlyle with being his Master, but is definitely acknowledging and bringing Carlyle's beliefs from the philosophical level to the practical situation:

But our enlightened British Public is too busy clamouring for short deeds and cheap means of litigation, ever to give thought or time to mere "sentimental grievances". Have you seen the strange comment on Carlyle's letter of some months ago, in which he prophesied evil things to come, if England still persisted in doing her work "ill, swiftly, and mendaciously"? Our export trade, for the first five months of this year, shows a decrease of just eight millions! The newspapers note, with a horrified amazement, that the continental nations decline dealing any longer at the "old shop", and fall back on home products, and try to explain it by reference to the Capital and Labour question. Carlyle foresaw Germany's future, and told us plainly of it; he foresees England's decadence, and warns us just as plainly of that; and the price we have already paid, in this year of grace 1874, for telling him to hold his tongue, is just eight millions.<sup>43</sup>

A few years later, after the Turkish question had become prominent, Ruskin defended Carlyle and himself, among others, from the disagreement of the majority and managed to interject the increasingly frequent martyred tone to his complaint:

There are reserves, references, difficulties, limits, excitements, in all their words and ways, which are inscrutable to me; and at this moment I am unable to say a word about the personal conduct of any one, respecting the Turkish or any other national question, - remaining myself perfectly clear as to what was always

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<sup>43</sup>Works, XXVIII, Fors Clavigera, p. 142.

needed, and still needs, to be done, but utterly unable to conceive why people talk, or do, or do not, as hitherto they have spoken, done, and left undone. But as to actual needs, it is now nearly two years since Mr. Carlyle, Mr. Froude, and several other men of "creditable" (Shall we say?) name, gathered together at call of Mr. Gladstone, as for a great national need, together with a few other men of more retired and studious mind, Edward Burne-Jones for one, and myself for another, and did then plainly and to the best of their faculty tell the English nation what it had to do.

The people of England answered, by the mouths of their journals, that Mr. Carlyle and Mr. Froude knew nothing of history, that Mr. Gladstone was a dishonest leader of a party, and that the rest of us were insignificant, or insane, persons.<sup>44</sup>

Carlyle, although encouraging Ruskin in his political writings, heartily disapproved of the St. George's Guild. Ruskin, however, despite Carlyle's criticism, pressed on with the fantastic plans for his colony. Carlyle was still, for him, an accredited leader, but, in the following passage from manuscript dealing with the Guild, he had become for the occasion an equal rather than Master. To Ruskin, where the Guild was involved, Ruskin was the lone soul struggling for his ideal:

I had long foreseen with Carlyle, the approach, in connection with the increased force of popular feeling in the Senate, of the troubles in administration of laws respecting land, which have been intensified by the misguided action of the Irish Land League. And it was my hope that the earnest adjuration of Carlyle, followed by the strict analysis which between the years of 1860 and 1870 I had given my best strength to complete of the economical laws on which the real prosperity of a nation depends, would have obtained so much attention from the

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<sup>44</sup>Works, XXIX, Fors Clavigera, pp. 364-5.



thinking part of the public as to obtain for me the support of some influential men in showing, first, what the power of a landlord would become, morally and politically, who devoted himself to the welfare of his peasantry as a quite final, instead of a secondary, object; secondly, what noble influence might be held by a society composed of persons who devoted the portion of their income usually supposed to be spent by Christian men in charity to what I had - whether convincingly or not, at all events conclusively - shown to be the best form of charity, "the purchase of land in healthy districts, and the employment of labourers on that land under the carefulest supervision, and with proper means of mental instruction."<sup>45</sup>

Throughout the decade prior to Carlyle's death, Ruskin interjected both consciously and unconsciously, sentences of intense sorrow, bitterness, self-pity and what strikes me as satisfied martyrdom in his letters and published works. He declared in Letter LXI of Fors Clavigera that "...truly I have always loved my masters, Turner, Tintoret and Carlyle, to the exclusion of my own thoughts..."<sup>46</sup> A few months later, a sentiment of precisely the same vein appeared again in Fors, this time with a bit more elaboration:

I was first driven into literature that I might defend the fame of Turner; since that day I have been explaining the power, or proclaiming the praise of Tintoret, - of Luini, - or Carpaccio, - of Botticelli, - of Carlyle; - never thinking for an instant of myself: and sacrificing what little faculty, and large pleasure, I had in painting, either from nature or noble art, that, if possible, I might bring others to see what I rejoiced in, and understand what I had deciphered.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>45</sup>Works, XXX, p. 153.

<sup>46</sup>Works, XXVIII, Fors Clavigera, p. 487.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid, p. 648.

Again, when declining to stand for Rector of the University of Edinburgh, Ruskin wrote in his refusal, in regard to politics, "that, with Carlyle, I stand, we two alone now in England, for God and the Queen."<sup>48</sup>

The death of Carlyle on 5th February 1881 was a distinct loss to Ruskin. He did not mourn for, as he wrote to Mary Gladstone ten days later:

The death of Carlyle is no sorrow to me. It is, I believe, not an end - but a beginning of his real life. Nay, perhaps also of mine. My remorse, every day he lived, for having not enough loved him in the days gone by, is not greater now, but less, in the hope that he knows what I am feeling about him at this - and all other moments.<sup>49</sup>

Of what Ruskin perhaps was not consciously aware was the loss of Carlyle as a stabilizing influence. Few were the men from whom Ruskin would accept advice or warning, and Carlyle was the main one of these. Ruskin did not, of course, heed Carlyle's admonitions about a major project like the St. George's Guild, but while acknowledging him as a Master, he at least would listen to Carlyle's Scottish-Puritan practicality which was closely interwoven with his ideology. Ruskin's toleration of alien ideas or valid criticism declined noticeably during his later years, from a level which had not been high even in youth. Thus, Carlyle's death removed a valuable mentor.

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<sup>48</sup>E. T. Cook, The Life of John Ruskin, II, p. 320.

<sup>49</sup>Works, XXXVII, Letters, p. 341.

In the same month as Carlyle's death, Ruskin "once more passed into acute mania, and raved for a month."<sup>50</sup> During his recovery in March, he wrote to his devoted friend, Charles Eliot Norton, a letter which emphasized his discipleship to Carlyle:

I shall have some strange passages of dream to tell you of as soon as I am strong again. The result of them, however, is mainly my throwing myself now into the mere fulfilment of Carlyle's work.

Say words of him - say you. Are not his own words written in white-hot fire on every city-wall of Europe?

Read Past and Present again, now.

This was the main part of the cause of my dream...<sup>51</sup>

Despite the disorder from which he was suffering, the letter remains as a lucid statement of Ruskin's attitude of many years toward Carlyle, and, in addition, is about the last of the emphatic declarations of this relationship as conceived by him. Cook notes that "So, in his Report of January 1886 on the St. George's Guild, Ruskin speaks of his scheme as 'following Carlyle's grander exhortation in Past and Present',"<sup>52</sup> and this was a last feeble echo of his great Master-Disciple outpourings.

Ruskin's comments on Carlyle from after his death to approximately 1889 need to be included here to give a complete picture of the relationship between the two men, however contradictory they may be to the general impression hitherto. They range in degree from touching reminiscences

<sup>50</sup>Joan Evans, John Ruskin, p. 388.

<sup>51</sup>Works, XXXVII, Letters, p. 345.

<sup>52</sup>E. T. Cook, The Life of John Ruskin, II, p. 320.



of friendship to vituperative attacks and, unfortunately, cannot be analysed purely from an objective standpoint. They must be interpreted with a consideration of Ruskin's mental condition and an awareness of the defense of Carlyle which the angry overtones often cover. In a letter to Miss Leete, written in January 1883, he gave, in the last sentence, particularly valuable advice which he woefully neglected to follow himself:

Nobody has any business with Carlyle's ways to his wife - or hers to him; - but you might depend on it - whatever Froude says, or does, about him will be right; in the meantime, the faultless public had better enjoy its own domestic bliss in peace. As for depreciating Carlyle because he had faults, the little phosphorescent polypes might as well depreciate the Dog Star because it wasn't the Polestar....<sup>53</sup>

Two months after this sage and perspicuous advice, Ruskin wrote to Charles Eliot Norton a letter which was his strongest mature attack on Carlyle:

The Emerson letters are infinitely sweet and wise; here and there, as in p. 30, vol. ii, unintelligible to me. C's, like all the words of him published since his death, have vexed me, and partly angered, with their perpetual "me miserum" - never seeming to feel the extreme ill manners of this perpetual whine; and, to what one dares not call an affected, but a quite unconsciously false extent, hiding the more or less of pleasure which a strong man must have in using his strength, be it but a heaving aside dust-heaps.

What in my own personal way I chiefly regret and wonder at in him is, the perception in

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<sup>53</sup>Works, XXXVII, Letters, p. 436.

all nature of nothing between the stars and his stomach, - his going, for instance, into North Wales for two months, and noting absolutely no Cambrian thing or event, but only increase of Carlylian bile.

Not that I am with you in thinking Froude wrong about the Reminiscences. They are to me full of his strong insight, and in their distress, far more pathetic than those howlings of his earlier life about Cromwell and others of his quite best work; but I am vexed for want of a proper Epilogue of your own.<sup>54</sup>

A letter from Norton in April, 1883, refutes such an attitude. Norton, the loyal friend of both Carlyle and Ruskin, was an extremely intelligent, cultivated and sensible man. His often moving letters reflect his sensitivity and the perfection of his friendship with the two men. To Ruskin, he said:

Even you, I sometimes fancy, underrate the worth of the man, and let the trivial and external traits of his unique individuality go for too much in your estimate of him. His essential nature was solitary in its strength, its sincerity, its tenderness, its nobility. He was nearer Dante than any other man. He belonged to the same order of spirits. Like Dante his face was black with the smoke of Hell, and the street-boys called him names and threw mud at him. His stomach sometimes got the better of his head, but that it did not master his heart and break his will is a marvel.<sup>55</sup>

On 16th April, Ruskin replied to Norton and showed some of the old devotion to Carlyle; however, he offered an excuse which somewhat clouded the spontaneity of this love:

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<sup>54</sup>Ibid., pp. 440-441.

<sup>55</sup>Charles Eliot Norton, Letters of Charles Eliot Norton (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1913), II, p. 147.

I must answer your kind letter the day I get it, chiefly to thank you for the strong and precious words about Carlyle. My one question about a man is, whether his work be right or not. Pope's lies, or Byron's, in the Waltz affair and the like, or Carlyle's egoisms, or my own follies, or Turner's, I recognize as disease or decay, or madness, and take no interest in the nosology; but I never excuse them or think them merely stomachic, but spiritual disease.<sup>56</sup>

Cook, in his most approving biography of Ruskin, noted Ruskin's vexation with Carlyle's letters, and in particular reference to the following letter to Norton commented that "Carlyle and Ruskin had, it seems, a consciousness of each other's shortcomings. Ruskin in his diaries does mew and moan, but at least as often he rejoices and resolves."<sup>57</sup> If one appreciates his acid comments on friends, perhaps Ruskin's letters are more cheerful:

...it's no use always saying "ay de me!" like Carlyle. I'm really ashamed of him in those letters to Emerson. My own diaries are indeed full of mewling and moaning, all to myself, but I think my letters to friends have more a tendency to crowing, or, at least, on the whole, try to be pleasant.<sup>58</sup>

The attitude toward Carlyle shown in these letters is, even in the minuteness of several of the complaints, so irreconcilable with Ruskin's former praise that a more detailed study of the cause must be given. The frustration of his work and the unhappiness of his relations with many friends

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<sup>56</sup>Works, XXXVII, Letters, p. 449.

<sup>57</sup>E. T. Cook, The Life of John Ruskin, II, p. 563.

<sup>58</sup>Works, XXXVII, Letters, pp. 495-6.

were secondary causes, both intermingled with his mental condition which was becoming steadily worse. Joan Evans is again the most explicit of the biographers. In a concise and sympathetic chapter, she has chronicled his many illnesses. Ruskin's first great attack occurred in 1878 and was followed by a slow recovery.<sup>59</sup> This was succeeded by the aforementioned madness of 1881.<sup>60</sup> Then, "In the spring of 1882 another attack of madness overcame him, and he was 'darkly ill'".<sup>61</sup> Again in July 1885 he was severely stricken and "His recovery was very incomplete, yet not so incomplete that he was not aware of its imperfection".<sup>62</sup> A year later in 1886, "In summer mania once more assailed him....He worried because he could find no 'cause' for the attack".<sup>63</sup> Illnesses followed in July 1887,<sup>64</sup> early in 1888,<sup>65</sup> and, after a trip to the continent, at the end of this same year.<sup>66</sup> "His sixth attack of madness in the summer of 1889 left him almost incapable of writing anything but his signature. He never left Brantwood, and was the shadow of himself."<sup>67</sup> Thus, letters and other material of this period must be read with especial discernment. It is not my

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<sup>59</sup> Joan Evans, John Ruskin, pp. 378-380.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., p. 388.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., p. 391.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., p. 399.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., p. 401.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., p. 402.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., p. 403.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., p. 406.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., p. 407.

supposition that they must be discarded as valueless; rather, it is the hope that the irritability and pain of illness evident in them will not automatically hide from the reader the basic friendship and agreement which they may contain.

In 1884, Ruskin gave his last and most disconnected series of lectures entitled The Pleasure of England. The fifth lecture, with its judgments on Protestantism, aroused consternation,<sup>68</sup> and in it, Ruskin made a further rash statement on Carlyle:

Our only historians (ordinarily so called) are Carlyle, Froude, and Helps, but none of them can see all round a thing as Scott does. Froude does not even know whether he is a Catholic or a Protestant; Carlyle is first the one and then the other; while Helps is deficient because he never understands Catholicism at all.<sup>69</sup>

By 1885, Ruskin was vaguely retired, although still involved with the St. George's Guild, his collections, a voluminous correspondence and ideas and notes for books. He was also disturbed with Norton who was editing the letters of Carlyle and who was angered by Froude's publication and interpretation of the details of Carlyle's marriage.<sup>70</sup> Ruskin, at

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<sup>68</sup>Derrick Leon, Ruskin the Great Victorian (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1949), p. 544.

<sup>69</sup>Cook, Studies in Ruskin, p. 254

<sup>70</sup>Norton had written: "No unbiased person can, I believe, read the Life without a conviction that the original text - the letters - does not support Mr. Froude's comment; that he has throughout glossed the letters in a false and evil spirit, that he had distorted their plain significance, and misinterpreted them with perverse ingenuity. The process is too open; he has revealed his own nature, and he has not succeeded in obscuring, for more than a brief moment, the real character



this time, wrote to Norton, saying:

I am so very glad you have got those letters to edit (Footnote; Early Letters of Thomas Carlyle, edited by C. E. Norton, 1886. Ruskin, however, was by no means pleased with Mr. Norton's prefator attack upon Froude: see below, p. 569 (Letter to Norton from Ruskin, 28th August, 1886 - "you had better, by the way, have gone crazy for a month yourself than written that niggling and nagging article on Froude's misprints.")) Carlyle is entirely himself when he stops talking of himself; but I totally disagree<sup>71</sup> with you about the wife letters being sacred.

Between the years 1885 and 1889, Ruskin wrote Praeterita, an autobiography and reminiscence; a book which is calmer and more easily readable in contrast to the involved outpourings of his earlier works. In it, Ruskin was critical of men and ideas, as usual, but he freed himself, in sections, from his customary diatribes. He included some more rational criticisms of Carlyle, and, at the same time, statements as to his devotion to him. Here, the love of Carlyle as friend and master shines through their differences as, for example, when he wrote:

In the beginning of the Carlyle-Emerson correspondence, edited with too little comment by my dear friend Charles Norton, I find at page 18 this - to me entirely disputable, and to my thought, so far as undisputed, much blameable and pitiable, exclamation of my master's: 'Not till we can think that here and there one is thinking of us, one is loving us, does this waste earth become a peopled garden.' My training, as the reader has perhaps enough perceived, produced in me the precisely opposite sentiment. My times of happiness had always been when nobody

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of those to whom he has done wrong. His blows are vain, malicious mockery." Charles Eliot Norton, Letters of Charles Eliot Norton, II, p. 136.

<sup>71</sup>Works, XXXVII, Letters, p. 543.

was thinking of me....

I don't mean in the least that I could have done without them (his parents). They were, to me, much more than Carlyle's wife to him; and if Carlyle had written, instead of, that he wanted Emerson to think of him in America, that he wanted his father and mother to be thinking of him at Ecclefechan, it had been well. But that the rest of the world was waste to him unless he had admirers in it, is a sorry state of sentiment enough; and I am somewhat tempted, for once, to admire the exactly opposite temper of my own solitude.<sup>72</sup>

Slightly later in Praeterita, in one of his recurrent touching phrases, Ruskin wrote words of Carlyle to throw "more lovely light on his character than any he has written."<sup>73</sup> This was followed, unfortunately, by the recollection of a disagreement between the two:

We fell away on Mill's essay on the substitution of patriotism for religion.

'Actually the most paltry rag of' - a chain of vituperative contempt too fast to note - 'it has fallen my lot to come in with. Among my acquaintance I have not seen a person talking of a thing he has so little understood.' The point of his indignation was Mill's supposing that, if God did not make everybody 'happy', it was because He had no sufficient power, 'was not enough supplied with the article'. Nothing makes Carlyle more contemptuous than this coveting of happiness.<sup>74</sup>

Praeterita contains some of Ruskin's last and best commentary on Carlyle. One quite different picture of the master was given in a charming description:

I am so glad to be led back by Joanie to the thoughts of Carlyle, as he showed himself to her, and to me, in those spring days, when he used to take pleasure in the quiet of Denmark Hill Garden

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<sup>72</sup>Works, XXXV, Praeterita, pp. 165-166.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid., p. 460.

<sup>74</sup>Ibid., p. 462.



and to use all his influence with me to make me contented in my duty to my mother; which he, as, with even greater insistence, Turner, always told me was my first; - both of them seeing, with equal clearness, the happiness of the life that was possible to me in merely meeting my father's affection and hers, with the tranquil exertion of my own natural powers, in the place where God had set me.<sup>75</sup>

The description is shortly followed by an analysis of the influence of the border country on Scott and Carlyle. This last pertinent statement of Ruskin's to be used here does close, despite its unsound logic, with a remarkably penetrating suggestion for the cause of Carlyle's development as a prophet of social reform:

It is farther strange to me, even now, on reflection - to find how great the influence of this double ocean coast and Cheviot mountain border was upon Scott's imagination; and how salutary they were in withdrawing him from the morbid German fancies which proved so fatal to Carlyle: but there was this grand original difference between the two, that, with Scott, his storytelling and singing were all in the joyful admiration of that past with which he could re-people the scenery he gave the working part of his day to traverse, and all the sensibility of his soul to love; while Carlyle's mind, fixed anxiously on the future, and besides embarrassed by the practical pinching, as well as the unconfessed shame, of poverty, saw and felt from his earliest childhood nothing but the faultfulness and gloom of the present.<sup>76</sup>

What short, general conclusion, therefore, can be drawn from this portrait of Carlyle as seen through the eyes of Ruskin? Taking into consideration their differences, dis-

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<sup>75</sup>Ibid., pp. 540-541.

<sup>76</sup>Ibid., pp. 545-546.

agreements and diverse temperaments as they were noted by Ruskin, the great impression remains one of a remarkable friendship with the predominate opinion of Ruskin that Carlyle was his Master. A philosophic divergence between the two is rarely mentioned, although, as will be shown in a later section, this did exist. Carlyle remained for Ruskin his staunchest supporter and the one ally to whom he could always turn. When Ruskin began his political writings, Carlyle was already recognized as a prophet and sage and he was, for Ruskin, an invaluable friend who, through his assistance and similar abhorrence of the condition of England, provided the leadership which Ruskin desired. Together against the times, they were, for him, a union of like spirits who presented a single firm front against their antagonists.

## Chapter II

CARLYLE'S JUDGMENT OF RUSKIN

The friendship of Carlyle with Ruskin, as shown in the journals and correspondence, conveys an attitude quite dissimilar to that of Ruskin towards Carlyle. Absent, of course, is that air of idolatry so prevalent in Ruskin's letters, and gone too is any sense of the Master-Disciple relationship which was stressed so assiduously by the younger. On the contrary, Carlyle, with his ingrained bluntness and honesty, did not hesitate to criticize Ruskin harshly about his theories and fancies, while this same balanced honesty allowed him to praise with enthusiasm the finely expressed sentiments and those jabs at economics which corresponded at the least in spirit so closely with his own. Consequently, we are able to trace Carlyle's opinion of Ruskin, not only as a writer but as a man, and to assess his conception of the philosophic affinity which existed between the two.

The number of surviving letters of Carlyle to and about Ruskin is not great, and their cumulative effect tends to be misleading. Many of these letters refer to specific points which Ruskin stressed, and naturally these were praised or criticized by Carlyle inasmuch as they coincided with similar beliefs of his own. Caution, then, must be taken to ensure that these comments are viewed in the proper perspective and correlated with letters and

comments which illuminate Ruskin as an entirety of beliefs and the personality which constitute a man.

The praise and encouragement by Carlyle of Ruskin's writings came, naturally enough, early in their friendship, particularly with the publication of the first volume of the Stones of Venice in 1851. In a letter filled with kindness and pleasure, Carlyle informed Ruskin that he:

...was already deep in the Stones; and clearly purpose to hold on there. A strange, unexpected, and I believe, most true and excellent Sermon on Stones - as well as the best piece of school-mastering in Architectorics; from which I hope to learn much in a great many ways. The spirit and purport of these critical studies of yours are a singular sign of the times to me, and a very gratifying one. Right good speed to you, and victorious arrival on the farther shore! It is a quite new "Renaissance", I believe, we are getting into just now: either towards new wider manhood, high again as the eternal stars; or else into final death, and the marsh of Gehenna for evermore! A dreadful process, but a needful and inevitable one; nor do I doubt at all which way the issue will be, though which is to be trampled out and abolished in the process, may be very doubtful. God is great; and sure enough, the changes in the "Construction of Sheepfolds", as well as in other things, will require to be very considerable.<sup>1</sup>

The friendship of the two men matured rapidly for each needed the companionship of the other to alleviate the intellectual solitude in which both so nearly dwelt. Carlyle, frustrated and discouraged because of the needlessness which followed the attention to and fame of his writings, welcomed Ruskin's understanding and similar ideas. A sense of this

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<sup>1</sup>Works, IX, p. xlvii.

welcome is revealed in a letter to Ruskin in which Carlyle anticipated the arrival of volume three of *Modern Paintings*. Writing in December 1855, he said:

I am longing for your Book, the feeling you have about matters is altogether my own; and you have not yet hacked your sword blunt in striking at the stony head of Human Stupidity, but rush in upon it as if it were cleavable or conquerable, - more power to your elbows..<sup>2</sup>

When in the following month the book appeared, Carlyle enthusiastically thanked Ruskin for his copy, and in addition, praised both the content of the book and the character of the author. The appendix treating plagiarism and Ruskin's debt to Carlyle also helped to sustain his high opinion.<sup>3</sup> Altogether, the letter reflected great pleasure along with a small measure of scepticism:

Last night your beautiful Book was handed in to me; a very handsome welcome indeed on one's return home. I have already galloped extensively up and down over it; find that it will be excellent reading for me in the coming nights. That is the real Sermon of the season and Epoch; Sermon "meaning many things", by the most eloquent Preacher I have heard these 20 years, and who does mean wholly what he says. A beautiful enthusiasm is in him, a sharp flashing insight and very potent melody of utterance; a noble audacity and confidence in Truth's gaining the victory, - much sooner than it will do! For the odds are terrible against it, in these utterly decadent and indeed quite rotten times. I wish you long life; and more and more power and opportunity of uttering forth, in tomes of sphere-harmony mixed with thunder, these salutary messages

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<sup>2</sup>Charles Richard Sanders, "Carlyle's Letters to Ruskin: A Finding List With Some Unpublished Letters and Comments", *Bulletin of John Rylands Library Manchester*, XLI No. 1 (September, 1958), 214.

<sup>3</sup>*Works*, V, pp. 427-30.



to your poor fellow creatures, - whom (including us) may God pity. I also am, for my own particular share of the booty, grateful, as I may well be, - beyond what shall be written at present.<sup>4</sup>

During four months in 1860, Ruskin's essays on economics entitled Unto This Last were published in the Cornhill Magazine amid a storm of ridicule and denunciation. Carlyle, as has been stated, was Ruskin's staunchest defender, delighted with this new antagonist of current theory. In writing to Ruskin at this time, he was jubilant and encouraging; yet, he did not allow his enthusiasm to hinder his critical facilities. He ended the letter with a reservation which was to be iterated throughout his life and which was to remain an area of division in the beliefs of the two men:

You go down through those unfortunate dismal-science people like a treble-X of Senna, Glauber, and Aloes; like a fit of British cholera, threatening to be fatal! I have read your paper with exhilaration, exultation, often with laughter, with bravissimo! Such a thing flung suddenly into half a million dull British heads on the same day, will do a great deal of good. I marvel in parts at the lynx-eyed sharpness of your logic, at the pincer-grip (red-hot pincers) you take of certain bloated cheeks and blown-up bellies. More power to your elbow (though it is cruel in the extreme). If you dispose, stand to that kind of work for the next seven years, and work out then a result like what you have done in painting....meantime my joy is great to find myself henceforth in a minority of two, at any rate....On third last page, and never till then, I pause slightly,

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<sup>4</sup>Sanders, loc. cit.



not too sorrowfully, and appeal to the times coming (Noble is the spirit there, too, my friend; but alas, it is not Philanthropismus that will do there; it is Rhadamanthismus I sorrowfully see) which are yet at a great distance! Go on and prosper.<sup>5</sup>

Two years later, the same critical public response ensued from the publication, serially, of Munera Pulveris. Again, Carlyle offered gratefully received encouragement and a confirmation of the identity of their views. Cook and Wedderburn observe that in the following letter the reference to the Cornhill articles indicates that Carlyle had forgotten his previous reading of Unto This Last and his letter concerning it just quoted.<sup>6</sup> Following this re-reading in 1862, he minimized to insignificance the divergence which he had suggested in his previous letter (if indeed he reached the section of difference in his re-reading):

I have read, a month ago, your First in Fraser (of Munera Pulveris), and ever since have had a wish to say to it and you, Euge, macta nova virtute. I approved in every particular; calm, definite, clear; rising into the sphere of Plato (our almost best), which in exchange for the sphere of Macculloch, Mill and Co. is a mighty improvement! Since that, I have seen the little green book, too; reprint of your Cornhill operations, - about 2/3 of which was read to me (known only from what the contradiction of sinners had told me of it): - in every part of which I find a high and noble sort of truth, not one doctrine that I can intrinsically dissent from, or count other than salutary in the extreme, and pressingly needed in England above all.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Works, XVII, pp. xxxii - xxxiii.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. lxx.

<sup>7</sup>Loc. cit. An interesting bit of enthusiasm was shown by Carlyle after he had attended a Ruskin lecture in 1861

Carlyle, later the same summer, sent a copy of Unto This Last to Erskine and, in an accompanying letter, he indicated the esteem in which he held Ruskin and the expectations that he had for his further development. As yet, as through the next few years, Carlyle was not disturbed by the fanciful ideas which increasingly permeated Ruskin's thinking, and which expressed themselves in his writings and actions. The very presence of a supporter made negligible to Carlyle the current minor divergencies of belief. He wrote:

Here is a very bright little book of Ruskin's, which, if you have not already made acquaintance with it, is extremely well worth reading. Two years ago, when the essays came out in the fashionable magazines, there rose a shriek of anathema from all newspapers and publishing persons. But I am happy to say that the subject is to be taken up again and heartily gone into by the valiant Ruskin, who, I hope, will reduce it to a dog's likeness - its real physiognomy for a long time past to the unenchanted eye, and peremptorily bid it prepare to quit this afflicted earth, as R. has done to several things before now. He seems to me to have the best talent for preaching of all men now alive. He has entirely blown up the world that used to call itself of 'Art', and left it in an impossible posture, uncertain whether on its feet at all or on its head, and conscious that there will be no continuing on the bygone terms. If he could do as much for Political Economy (as I hope), it would be the greatest benefit achieved by preaching for generations past; the chasing off of one of the

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on Tree Leaves, when he said of it: "...I do not recollect to have heard in that place any neatest thing I liked so well as this chaotic one." (Froude, Carlyle's Life in London, II, p. 245 (see footnote 8, next page). Considering Carlyle's normal aversion to such gatherings, the tribute is actually quite a flattering one.

brutallest nightmares that ever sate on the bosom of slumbrous mankind, kept the soul of them squeezed down into an invisible state, as if they had no soul, but only a belly and a beaver faculty in these last sad ages, and were about arriving we know where in consequence. I have read nothing that pleased me better for many a year than these new Ruskiniana.<sup>8</sup>

Ruskin published Ethics of the Dust in December 1865. Its issue was preceded and followed by a most interesting connection with Carlyle, the inferences of which strengthen the conception of a close and understanding friendship between them. First, Cook and Wedderburn think that it was a suggestion of Carlyle's that induced Ruskin to write the book. They base this idea on a letter from Carlyle to Ruskin, 22 February 1865, in which he said:

I have a notion to come out actually some day soon; and take a serious Lecture from you on what you really know, and can give me some intelligible outline of, about the Rocks; - bones of our poor old Mother; which have always been venerable and strange to me. Next to nothing of rational could I ever learn of the subject....Alas, alas: we are dreadful ignoramuses all of us! Answer nothing, but don't be surprised, if I turn up some day.<sup>9</sup>

At the same time, however, great allowance must be made for the influence of the life and lectures at Winnington; certainly the effect of the school plays an important part in the structure of the book.

When the volume appeared, less than a year after his letter, Carlyle responded with an appreciative letter filled

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<sup>8</sup>James Anthony Froude, Thomas Carlyle, A History of His Life in London 1834-1881 (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1885), II, pp. 252-3.

<sup>9</sup>Works, XXVI, p. xxx.

with praise:

The Ethics of the Dust, which I devoured without pause, and intend to look at again, is a most shining Performance! Not for a long while have I read anything tenth-part so radiant with talent, ingenuity, lambent fire (sheet and other lightnings) of all commendable kinds! Never was such a Lecture on Crystallography before there had been nothing else in it, and there are all manner of things. In power of expression, I pronounce it to be supreme; never did anybody who had such things to explain, explain them better. And the bits of Egyptian Mythology, the cunning Dreams about Pthah, Neith, etc., apart from their elucidative quality, which is exquisite, have in them a poetry that might fill any Tennyson with despair. You are very dramatic, too; nothing wanting in the stage-directions, in the pretty little indications - a very pretty stage and dramatis personae altogether. Such is my first feeling about your book, dear R. Come soon, and I will tell you all the faults of it, if I gradually discover a great many. In fact, come at any rate!<sup>10</sup>

That Carlyle did not think the book flawless we also know from a letter to his brother, written the following day in which he commented on the "sad weakness of backbone";<sup>11</sup> however, his overall verdict was one of great praise.

From another viewpoint, the advisability of this flattering commendation has been questioned. Taking into consideration Ruskin's instability, Evans feels that the overwhelming praise of Carlyle was detrimental to him. She considers Ethics of the Dust as a retrogression toward

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<sup>10</sup>Works, XVIII, pp. lxxiii - lxxiv.

<sup>11</sup>Sanders, op. cit., p. 223.

childhood, emphasizing, as it did, Ruskin's love for and association with the young girls of Winnington. Of Carlyle she says that:

...his adulation of Ethics of the Dust implied that an adult philosopher approved the result of this turning back. Carlyle, perhaps, thought now of Ruskin as of a flawed person, and judged him by special standards with a special kindness; but such kindness when it is disguised as the criticism of an equal can do nothing but harm.<sup>12</sup>

Carlyle's opinion of Ruskin as an individual was less favourable and will be discussed at a later point; however, in regard to his writings, his judgment, although perhaps effusive, was here honest. In writing to Ruskin, Carlyle hinted, in for him an unusually delicate manner, that Ethics of the Dust had faults despite a general excellence. Yet, in the same period, writing to his brother, with whom he could be particularly blunt, he said that besides a "sad weakness of backbone" the book was "full of admirable talent"; "twists symbolically, in the strangest way, all its geology into Morality, Theology, Egyptian Mythology (with fiery cuts at Political Economy etc!)." <sup>13</sup> No reason seems to exist to suppose that Carlyle was other than impartial toward Ruskin in this instance. Ethics of the Dust, in the present age, may appear to be whimsically and childishly constructed, but at the same time, it more than ful-

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<sup>12</sup>Evans, op. cit., pp. 285-6.

<sup>13</sup>Sanders, op. cit., p. 223.



filled the stated intentions of its author; intentions which Carlyle approved of and praised.

The friendship of the two men was strengthened by their alliance on the Eyre Defence Committee in 1866. Ruskin was an enthusiastic supporter of the Defence and his activity was gratifying to Carlyle; indeed, it illustrated a fundamental similarity in their beliefs. Both felt that Governor Eyre had done his duty in suppressing the revolt and maintaining the power of the government; a power which, in protecting society, was above the lives lost, tragic though these deaths were. Ruskin expressed their joint feelings when he said of the opponents of Governor Eyre, the Jamaica Committee, that "...they are for Liberty, and I am for Lordship; they are Mob's men, and I am a King's man."<sup>14</sup> A speech for the Defence by Ruskin elicited Carlyle's approval and he wrote to Miss Bromley commending him:

Ruskin's speech - now don't frown upon it, but read it again till you understand it - is a right gallant thrust I can assure you. While all the world stands tremulous, shilly-shallying from the gutter, impetuous Ruskin plunges his rapier up to the very hilt in the abominable belly of the vast block-headism, and leaves it staring very considerably.<sup>15</sup>

At the same time, however, Ruskin's separate concept of slavery, brought forth by the question, was not mentioned,

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<sup>14</sup>Works, XVIII, p. 550. From Letter to Daily Telegraph December 20, 1865.

<sup>15</sup>Froude, op. cit., II, p. 330.

naturally enough, by Carlyle at this time.

The appearance of the Time and Tide letters in 1867 served to confirm Carlyle's hopes for Ruskin, at least in regard to his work on economics. Despite Ruskin's wide deviations from the subject throughout the series and various differences in ideology with his master, Carlyle was able to write of him with earnestness to Lady Ashburton:

Ruskin I have seen twice (since the return from Mentone) (who seems to have great things in view, more than one). He is writing some pungent Political Economy letters "addressed to a working man" (which come out in the Manchester newspapers): well worth reading, these, among the deluge of stuff that requires not to be read.<sup>16</sup>

The fact becomes more certain: Carlyle was willing to tolerate the idiosyncrasies and convolutions of Ruskin's style as well as the sometimes wide chasm between their beliefs for the sake of Ruskin's vigour in condemning the existing order and his basically agreeable planning for the new.

Ruskin's next major work, Queen of the Air, produced the same fervent praise from Carlyle. Froude discusses this attitude as it appeared in 1869, saying:

Ruskin was becoming more and more interesting to him. Ruskin seemed to be catching the fiery cross from his hand, as his own strength was failing. Writing this autumn to myself, he said, 'One day, by express desire on both sides, I had Ruskin for some hours, really interesting and entertaining. He is full of projects, of generous prospective activities, some of which I opined to him would prove chimerical. There is, in

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<sup>16</sup>Sanders, op. cit., p. 225.

singular environment, a ray of real heaven in R. Passages of that last book "Queen of the Air" went into my heart like arrows.<sup>17</sup>

When writing to Ruskin, Carlyle was even more effusive and he once more, as after the publication of Unto This Last, encouraged Ruskin to continue his writing; now, "again and again"; an encouragement which would fulfil Froude's concept of "catching the fiery cross". Carlyle wrote:

Last week I got your Queen of the Air and read it. Euge! Euge! No such Book have I met with for long years past. The soul now in the world who seems to feel as I do on the highest matters, and speaks mir aus dem Herzen exactly what I wanted to hear! As to the natural history of those old Myths, I remained here and there a little uncertain, but as to the meanings you put into them, never anywhere. All these things I not only 'agree' with, but would use Thor's Hammer, if I had it, to enforce and put into action on this rotten world. Well done, well done! and pluck up a heart, and continue again and again. And don't say 'most great thoughts are dressed in shrouds': many, many are the Phoebus Apollo celestial arrows you still have to shoot into the foul Pythous and poisonous abominable Megatheriums and Plesiosaurians that go staggering about, large as cathedrals, in our sunk Epoch again.<sup>18</sup>

Unanimity with Ruskin, judging from Carlyle's letters, was not complete, however. First, Carlyle considered that Ruskin completely misjudged the Germans, both the people and the culture. With Albrecht Durer a notable exception, Ruskin thought German art deplorable, the people vulgar, and

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<sup>17</sup>Froude, op. cit., II p. 383.

<sup>18</sup>Works, XIX, p. Ixx.

the philosophy pernicious. During his tour of the country in 1859, he had written to George Richmond that never had he "been thrown into such a state of hopeless and depressing disgust as by this journey in Germany", that "German architecture - even the old - is all detestable."<sup>19</sup> His opinion of the metaphysicians was no kinder. To Carlyle, a primary interpreter of German philosophy in Britain, his unaltering views were erroneous and unfortunate. Carlyle was joined, though, in partial agreement by him on the role of Germany in the Franco-Prussian war and he congratulated Ruskin on two letters published in the Daily Telegraph. Nonetheless, Ruskin, Carlyle believed, still misunderstood the Germans, and in particular regard to Ruskin's letter of concern over the attack on Paris he wrote:

...Your Second Letter, full of holy indignation was as if it came from my own heart; at the end, however, I think you do the Germans wrong. My notion is: Bismark knows very well what he is aiming at; & I find withal that it is a perfectly just thing; likewise that all the World cannot prevent him from getting it; and that he is calmly taking all the necessary steps for coercing an inarticulate mad and furious Wasps' Nest of thirty five million delirious Mountebanks to quietly grant it to him, with the Minimum of Sulphur applied.<sup>20</sup>

A few years later, following the July 1874 letter of Fors Clavigera, Carlyle again told Ruskin of his great misconception of the Germans. In Letter 43, Ruskin had included

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<sup>19</sup>Works, XXXVI, p. 309.

<sup>20</sup>Sanders, op. cit., p. 231.

the following extract from the Pall Mall Gazette and his comment upon it:

Bismark went on to justify his annexation of Alsace-Lorraine by geographical necessity. Otherwise he would rather not have grafted the French twig upon the German tree.

'THE FRENCH ARE ENEMIES NEVER TO BE APPEASED. Take away from them the cook, the tailor, and the hairdresser, and what remains of them is a copper-coloured Indian.'

Now it does not matter whether Prince Bismarck ever said this, or not. That the saying should be attributed to him in a leading journal, without indication of doubt or surprise, is enough to show what the German temper is publicly recognized to be. And observe what a sentence it is - thus attributed to him. The French are only copper-coloured Indians, finely dressed. This said of the nation which gave us Charlemagne, St. Louis, St. Bernard, and Joan of Arc; which founded the central type of chivalry in the myth of Roland; which showed the utmost height of valour yet recorded in history, in the literal life of Guiscard; and built Chartres Cathedral!<sup>21</sup>

Carlyle's retort was a harsh criticism of the paragraph itself and of Ruskin's general view of the Germans, for he wrote:

I had much to say about the last Fors and things relating to yourself but my unfortunate ethereal part is so crushed down into the foul mire by this intolerable heat and feebleness of nerve and muscle that I must forbear it all till a better time. I tell you only two things; first, that I think and have long thought that you are dreadfully in error as to the German people and the genius of Germany; which (including England & its Shakespeares, who are radically German) I place far above the genius and charac-

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<sup>21</sup>Works, XXVIII, pp. 111-112.



teristics of any other people ancient or modern; and truly I wish you could get to understand how poor an affair, if you deducted those Franks out of it who are purely German every fibre of them, and not the best of German, la belle France, with all its boundless self-conceit, and even its pretty tailoring and cooking and ingeniously filigreeing talent, would be.<sup>22</sup>

The second area in which Carlyle criticized Ruskin was that of art. Throughout his works, Carlyle had made numerous references to art's place and function in the world and credited it with little. Of genuine 'Art', he said that it:

...in all times is a higher synonym for God Almighty's Facts, - which come to us direct from heaven, but in so abstruse a condition, and cannot be read at all till the better intellect interpret them. That is the real function of our Aristos and of his divine gift.<sup>23</sup>

On the other hand, he believed that this ideal, when attempted, was rarely achieved and that consequently, dedication to art was generally valueless. Talking with Charles Norton, he inquired:

'How can Ruskin (...) justify his devotion to Art? Art does nothin' in these days, and is good for nothin'; and of all topics of human concern there's not one in which there's more hypocrisy and vain speakin'.... The pictures in our days have seldom any scrap

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<sup>22</sup>Sanders, op. cit., p. 235.

<sup>23</sup>Thomas Carlyle, Critical and Miscellaneous Essays (London: Chapman and Hall, 1872), p. 220.

of help or meanin' for any human soul, - mere products of emptiness and idleness, works o' the devil some o' them, but most of them rather deservin' to be consigned without delay to the limbo dei bambini.'<sup>24</sup>

To a certain extent, Ruskin's art theories were in conformity with Carlyle's, especially the Stones of Venice and the early volumes of Modern Painters, especially with the first book's definition that "the greatest picture is that which conveys to the mind of the spectator the greatest number of the greatest ideas..."<sup>25</sup> It is remarkable, however, that Ruskin's later theorizing did not result in harsher criticism from Carlyle.

With this attitude in mind, Carlyle's comments upon receiving Val d'Arno become most interesting. The book, which consists of "Ten Lectures on the Tuscan Art Directly Antecedent to the Florentine Year of Victories", is an expatiatory medley of history, economics and religion ostensibly bound and related to art. The relationship is confused. Carlyle acknowledged a gift of the book enthusiastically however, saying:

After several weeks of eager expectation, I received, morning before yesterday, the sequel to your kind little note, in the shape of four bright 4to lectures (...) on the Historical and Artistic development of the Val d'Arno. Many thanks to you for so pleasant and instructive a gift. The work is full of beautiful and delicate perceptions,

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<sup>24</sup>Norton, op. cit., I, pp. 442-3.

<sup>25</sup>Works, III, p. 92.

new ideas, both new and true, which throw a bright illumination over that important piece of History, and awake fresh curiosities and speculations on that and on other much wider subjects. It is all written with the old nobleness and fire, in which no other living voice to my knowledge equals yours. Perge, perge - and, as the Irish say, 'more power to your elbow!'<sup>26</sup>

Carlyle's praise in this letter is peculiarly elusive; he praised the spirit and style rather than the substance of the work. He was perhaps uneasy with Ruskin's determined intermingling of art and other subjects in a manner far removed from the precision with which he had linked art and history in his youth. Carlyle was undoubtedly happier with the books of Ruskin which dealt more purely with political economy. In addition, Cook and Wedderburn suggest that: "Carlyle had some personal reason to like the lectures, for in them Ruskin quoted his master's works and enforced his teaching."<sup>27</sup>

When Fors Clavigera commenced its monthly appearances in 1871, it was ill-received. "Only Carlyle", Evans states, "expressed unbounded admiration."<sup>28</sup> This description conveys a false impression, though, for Carlyle's enthusiasm was spasmodic and failed to survive throughout the series. His initial reaction was apparently unfavourable, for Sanders notes that "Ruskin seems to have given Carlyle an advanced

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<sup>26</sup>Works, XXIII, p. lv.

<sup>27</sup>Loc. cit.

<sup>28</sup>Evans, op. cit., p. 232.

copy of Fors Clavigera, Letter I, which made the old man decidedly uneasy" and he quotes from a letter to Carlyle's brother John:

There is further waiting for you an astonishing Paper by Ruskin...I think you never read a madder looking thing. I still hope (though with little confidence) that he will bethink him and drop the matter in time: therefore keep it to yourself in the meanwhile, - though, alas, I fear he will plunge into it all the same.<sup>29</sup>

It was not until the fifth letter was published that the praise became "unbounded" and Carlyle wrote to Ruskin:

This Fors Clavigera (No. 5), which I have just finished reading, is incomparable; a quasi-sacred consolation to me, which almost brings tears into my eyes! Every word of it is as if spoken, not out of my poor heart only but out of the eternal skies; words winged with Empyrean wisdom, piercing as lightning - and which I really do not remember to have heard the like of. Continue, while you have such utterances in you, to give them voice. They will find and force entrance into human hearts, whatever the 'angle of incidence' may be; that is to say, whether, for the degraded and inhuman Blockheadism we, so-called 'men', have mostly now become, you come in upon them at the broadside, at the top, or even at the bottom. Euge, Euge!<sup>30</sup>

His enthusiasm continued over at least the first two years, for he quoted from Letter 14 in his Early Kings of Norway,<sup>31</sup> and in April 1872, he asked Emerson: "Do you read Ruskin's Fors Clavigera, which he cheerily tells me gets itself re-

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<sup>29</sup>Sanders, op. cit., p. 232.

<sup>30</sup>Works, XXVII, pp. lxxxvi - lxxxvii.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., p. 247.

printed in America? If you don't, do, I advise you,"<sup>32</sup>

Carlyle's diminished tributes to Fors were in part attributable to the increasingly prominent role which the Guild of St. George played in the letters. Carlyle thought the scheme unsound and impracticable and had attempted to discourage Ruskin, but to no avail. Portraying Ruskin to William Allingham in 1878, Carlyle mixed his ethereal qualities with his foibles, saying:

There is a celestial brightness in Ruskin. His description of the wings of birds the most beautiful thing of the kind that can possibly be. His morality, too, is the highest and purest. And with all this a wonderful folly at times! The St. George's Company is utterly absurd. I thought it a joke at first.<sup>33</sup>

Carlyle, one suspects, also found the growing illogicality and letter-long digressions from economics disturbing and considered that the letters were losing their same value. Thus, by 1874, he could write to his brother that "Ruskin has not sent the Fors Clavigera this month, hitherto. Does this mean anything? I fear it does not mean that he has given it up altogether!"<sup>34</sup> Cook and Wedderburn also cite this passage and suggest yet another reason why Carlyle desired that the letters should cease: "The writing of these Letters, with their passionate appeals and note of mystic

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<sup>32</sup>Ibid., p. lxxxvii.

<sup>33</sup>Works, XXXVI, pp. xcvi - xcvi.

<sup>34</sup>Alexander Carlyle, editor, New Letters of Thomas Carlyle (London: John Lane, The Bodley Head, 1904), II, p. 316.



fervour, greatly excited Ruskin..."<sup>35</sup>

The feelings of Carlyle toward Ruskin, appreciated as an individual, are far more difficult to assess. The surviving statements made by him about Ruskin's personal worth are both enigmatic and contradictory. Placed together, his praises and criticisms create a blurred image which is hard to bring into a proven focus. In the end, it is necessary to remember the observation on Carlyle by Charles Eliot Norton who, amid the complaints of Carlyle's dyspeptic ill-humour, repeatedly noted that:

His great quality is humour, and like other humourists, even in his most serious moods his mind retains a certain playfulness, which finds vent in grim jokes and extravagant exaggerations. He is rarely to be taken au pied de la lettre.... Like all great talkers he says much for immediate effect, and forgets it as soon as said.... Emerson and Ruskin are the only distinguished living men of whom Carlyle spoke - in all the talk I ever had with him, - with entire freedom from sarcasm or depreciation, with something like real tenderness.<sup>36</sup>

Chronologically, Carlyle's judgments of Ruskin did not vary; indeed, they maintained a remarkable consistency throughout the years. Carlyle formed opinions of two predominate characteristics of him and iterated them from the beginning to the end of their friendship. He thought that a primary attribute of Ruskin was an utter sincerity, and,

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<sup>35</sup>Works, XXVIII, p. xv.

<sup>36</sup>Norton, op. cit., I, pp. 332-3.

on the other hand, he believed that Ruskin lived with an idealism which was above and unincorporated with the possibility of a human reality. Carlyle was led by this at times to consider that he was a weak man.

In the existing letters in which Carlyle discussed this facet of Ruskin the same descriptive ideas are very apt to be repeated in letters of near dates. Writing to his close friend, Lord Ashburton, in May 1856, Carlyle, in a lengthy analysis said:

This morning Ruskin, from Dover, sent me the enclosed note, with an old Newspaper, from which I have cut out what was of use to you, - Ruskin's Speech at Oxford to his assembled Mechanics. I have not read it, being extremely busy all morning: please do not burn it till I come; perhaps tomorrow or next day (if the Fates are so beneficent) I may find a chance of looking into it. Ruskin I have found in all things to mean well, and aim high with the very highest; but he strikes me always as infinitely too hopeful of men and things, in fact as having soared aloft out of all contact with rugged facts; which class of objects accordingly he contemplates, as with outspread level wings, very much at his ease, far up in the azure aether. - It is certain, however, he does teach various working young men to draw, and has a boundless zeal to continue teaching more and more. His Fourth Volume (which I have not time to read) is full of the finest "eloquence", Swiss descriptions &c., - the like of which I have hardly ever seen; - but tending nowhither, except toward the impracticable, the impossible, so far as I could surmise. It is one of the strangest Books, for gift and want of gift, I have ever met with. The man himself I find exceedingly amiable, in spite of all that is said. But he flies out like a soda-water bottle; gets into the eyes of various people (being incautiously drawn), and these of

course complain dreadfully!<sup>37</sup>

This frank and essentially critical letter had followed, by six months, a similar comment to Carlyle's brother John which was much less depreciating, however:

...Ruskin was here the other night;- a bottle of beautiful soda-water, - something like Rait of old times, only with an intellect of tenfold vivacity. He is very pleasant company now and then. A singular element,- very curious to look upon,- in the present puddle of the intellectual artistic so-called "world" in these parts at this date.<sup>38</sup>

At approximately the same time (January 1855), Carlyle wrote to Ruskin, inviting him to visit whenever possible, for:

...If you will really come and see me any evening or day (especially after half-past 3,- or otherwise giving warning before), it will be a chosen mercy to me, I can answer you. The view of a sincere human soul, even without thought in it, is like music to me; how much more if there is an opulence of human thoughts and cheery ingenuities and socialities in it!<sup>39</sup>

That the mention of Ruskin's quality of sincerity was not merely flattery on the part of Carlyle is attested by a much later letter which, according to Sanders, was probably written to C. A. Ward. Carlyle took exception to a point of criticism in an otherwise commendable critique and said that he objected:

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<sup>37</sup>David Alec Wilson, Life of Carlyle (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co., 1929), V, p. 222.

<sup>38</sup>Alexander Carlyle, op. cit., II, pp. 177-8.

<sup>39</sup>Sanders, op. cit., p. 210.

...when you seem to question not his strength alone, but his sincerity a little too; the latter I can testify to be complete, and even vehement and painful to him. If he live, there will be mission enough for him in the next 20 years.<sup>40</sup>

Two letters from the early months of 1872 give an excellent picture of Carlyle's feelings concerning Ruskin. They are strikingly similar in wording and content and probably offer the most balanced judgment of the Carlyle letters. In February 1872, he wrote to his brother:

...I am reading Ruskin's Books in these evenings;...I find a real spiritual comfort in the noble fire, wrath, and inexorability with which he smites upon all base things and wide-spread public delusion; and insists relentlessly on having the ideal aimed at everywhere; for the rest I do not find him wise - headlong rather, and I might even say weak. But there is nothing like him in England in these other respects....<sup>41</sup>

The second was written in April to Emerson, and discussing Ruskin generally Carlyle stated:

...There is nothing going on among us as notable to me as those fierce lightning-bolts Ruskin is copiously and desperately pouring into the black world of Anarchy all around him. No other man in England that I meet has in him the divine rage against iniquity, falsity, and baseness that Ruskin has and that every man ought to have. Unhappily he is not a strong man; one might say a weak man rather; and has not the least prudence of management; though if he can hold out for another fifteen years or so, he may produce, even in

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<sup>40</sup>Ibid., p. 224.

<sup>41</sup>Alexander Carlyle, op. cit., II, p. 284.

this way, a great effect. God grant it,  
say I.<sup>42</sup>

In 1874, perhaps because of the increasingly distressing letters of Fors Clavigera, Carlyle appeared less enthusiastic about Ruskin and told John Carlyle:

...I have seen Ruskin, these three Saturdays in punctual sequence at two P.M., who promises to come weekly at the same day and hour, by way of holiday to London. I get but little real insight out of him, though he is full of friendliness and is aiming as if at the very stars; but his sensitive, flighty nature disqualifies him for earnest conversation and frank communication of his secret thoughts...<sup>43</sup>

Evidence far more indicative of the unprejudiced view of Carlyle comes from a spoken statement of Carlyle himself. In 1872, during Norton's winter in London, Carlyle, after criticising Ruskin's art theories, said to Norton:

'Tis easy to find fault with Ruskin for his petulance and unreason and such other sins as they charge on him; but he's very much to be excused, and there's little or nothing in him that needs to be forgiven.<sup>44</sup>

The definitive facts which emerge from these statements of Carlyle are few. Assuredly, Carlyle believed in the sincerity of Ruskin and in his capabilities of style and descriptive and persuasive writing. In addition, and most important, he recognized that Ruskin was "the one soul now in England" who approached being in philosophic agree-

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<sup>42</sup>Works, XXVII, p. lxxxvii. (The first section of this letter is given on page .)

<sup>43</sup>Alexander Carlyle, op. cit., II, p. 310.

<sup>44</sup>Norton, op. cit., I, p. 443.



ment with him and who alone could be his successor. With these facts predominating, it is possible to read Carlyle's praise and criticism and postulate other facts. For the sake of Ruskin's alliance with him, Carlyle tolerated beliefs and idiosyncrasies for which he would have condemned other men. He maintained a remarkable lenience to Ruskin's passionate preachings on art, religion and the series of impracticalities coupled with the Guild of St. George and, furthermore, bore the strains of the vicissitudes of Ruskin's turbulent emotional life. The totality of these proves the important place in which much of Ruskin's work was held by Carlyle.

## Chapter 3

THE RELATIONSHIP OF CARLYLE AND RUSKIN AS SEEN BY  
THE CRITICS

Although incongruities arose in the judgments of Carlyle and Ruskin when each discussed the other, the disparity between the critics has been even greater when they have contrasted or aligned the works of the two writers. Of course, in both the nineteenth century and at the present time, agreement has existed on broad features and to a certain degree on specific details of the works. The nature of the criticism, however, has altered to a great extent in recent years. Traits which predominated in the earlier criticisms largely have disappeared, yet they reflected dominant opinions at the time of the greatest impact by Carlyle and Ruskin.

The criticism itself is of varying quality and with a few exceptions has improved noticeably since the days of Carlyle and Ruskin. The historical view in which the two men are now seen permits an impartiality which was rarely found in the last century, for modern critics are relatively unbiased in regard to the vital social and economic problems of that period. Consequently, the early criticism can be divided into definite groupings. Of primary interest are those critics who were political economists. Chief among these were the socialists who championed a growing movement at the end

of the century. In addition, there were the nineteenth century biographers and literary historians; among these Carlyle and Ruskin had their personal champions and detractors who placed one in high esteem to the detriment of the other. All too often the critics utilized only the statements of Carlyle or Ruskin which were acceptable to support their own beliefs, rather than developing ideas from the concepts of two sages. Finally, the emotional approach to current events is apparent in almost all of their contemporary critics. There is, too, what some might consider the florid and dramatic style of the era. The modern area of divergence in criticism incorporates the studies of psychologists who have sublimated a literary approach to literature to a questionable mental and environmental analysis.

The criticism of and by the quasi-disciples, the socialists, is of value, for it focuses attention on the use of Carlyle's and Ruskin's teachings in contrast to a purely theoretical criticism. During the life of Carlyle and most of that of Ruskin, neither man was viewed as being literarily associated with the socialist movement, either in its early Marxist-union connotation or in its evolvment as represented by the Fabian Society and other groups. Thus, their political writings did not enlarge or develop a political movement which was seen as such at that time. In 1891, however, the Socialist Henry Rose,

editor of the Hull Express, could write in his New Political Economy of the two:

I shall then direct attention to the way in which what is best in Socialist teaching has been expounded by certain leading writers - none of them, by the way, popularly regarded as Socialist - I mean Carlyle, Ruskin, and Henry George.<sup>1</sup>

Their lack of connection with the socialist movement was such that an advocate as fervent as Rose could only at this date acknowledge their relationship to each other and note a common critical observation concerning Ruskin's "superiority":

Though for some years I had had a good general acquaintance with the economic writings of Carlyle and Ruskin, and saw that there was a kinship between them, it was not until I engaged in the work of writing this booklet that I realized how very similar these authors are in their teachings, and in particular how very much Ruskin has been influenced by Carlyle. From Ruskin we not only get an inspiration akin to what Carlyle gives us, but his views are more definite - his practical proposals more intelligible and more reduced to scientific form.<sup>2</sup>

This association of Carlyle and Ruskin with the socialists has been recognized clearly in this century, although variations exist regarding the strength of attachment. In his study of Carlyle, Cazamian thought that:

"State-socialism" is the true definition for the doctrine of social reorganization

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<sup>1</sup>Henry Rose, The New Political Economy (Hull:1891), p. 13.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 75.

that we have so briefly sketched. Such is, at least, the ideal toward which Carlyle's suggestions point: intervention, centralisation, supervision of all national activities. It is also this ideal that, for almost a century, the forces of English life have been evolving. No moral force has made a more effective contribution to this process than the vigorous impulse Carlyle gave to the English mind, appealing to the nation's instinctive sense of how to preserve its force.<sup>3</sup>

In Victorian Critics of Democracy, Benjamin

Lippincott also placed Carlyle and Ruskin in the socialist lineage, but he excluded them as actual socialists despite their relationship with the movement. Speaking of Ruskin, he said:

Ruskin, Carlyle's disciple, was no less confident that the program of middle-class liberalism had brought about and perpetuated economic, social, and political disorder. He insisted that capitalism must be abandoned and cooperation replace competition, and that industry must be made honest and responsible; and like Carlyle, he insisted that a decent standard of life should be provided for the worker, that the worker should be educated and made secure. Again, like Carlyle, he placed his faith in autocracy and looked to English aristocrats to manage his ideal state. Unlike Carlyle, however, he did not urge the aristocracy to grab the reins of power, but beseeched them to usher in a new political day by reforming themselves. In spite of the reactionary political remedy that Carlyle and Ruskin advocated for the ills of their time, these men fathered the socialist movement in England.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Louis F. Cazamian, Carlyle (New York: Macmillan Company, 1932), p. 205.

<sup>4</sup>Benjamin E. Lippincott, Victorian Critics of Democracy (London: Oxford University Press, 1938), p. 2.



This doctrine was not socialism as derived from the period of the First or Second Internationals, nor was it, Lippincott pointed out, enough to make them socialists at a later date when they were more in accord with ideas of the eighteen eighties:

...His criticism, like Carlyle's, helped to undermine laissez faire both in principle and in application; at the same time, he did not a little to accustom men's thoughts to a social state. Though Ruskin was not a socialist, and Carlyle still less, these men did more than any other writers to prepare the way for socialist ideas.<sup>5</sup>

Almost these exact words were used by Ernest Barker in Political Thought in England, a book first published in 1915, when he hailed Carlyle as one of the great voices in English literature since 1848. Speaking of Ruskin he said:

In Fors Clavigera, a series of monthly letters to working men, written between 1871 and 1878 under the influence of Carlyle, and with something of the fury which his Master had shown in Past and Present, Ruskin criticized the condition of his age, and 'endeavoured to show the conditions under which alone great art (itself the product of the happy life of the workman) was possible' in the future. During the same period was founded St. George's Guild....It is curious to notice how these projected settlements, which were to be under the control of a landed aristocracy enforcing 'the beneficency of strict military order', correspond to the teaching of Carlyle in Shooting Niagara. Ruskin was no more a socialist than Carlyle. He did not believe in that democratic control of economic life,

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., pp. 58-9.

which is the vital article of Socialist faith....Nevertheless, in many ways he prepared the ground for Socialism.<sup>6</sup>

Despite this unanimity of opinion in a large area, variations in interpretations naturally appeared regarding particular aspects of the writings. Considered individually, it is certainly true that these differences are at times of little account; however, when they are considered in toto, the criticisms are bewildering. Here, again, the critics of the past few years have a valuable, impartial scholarship. Thus, Lippincott says:

Ruskin, however, was unable to accept democracy, for he held with Carlyle and Plato that the common man is not competent to exercise political power. This view of the common man also vitiated his conception of society as organic. To hold that the common man is inferior and on this view construct a hierarchical society, as did Plato and Carlyle as well as Ruskin, is to construct a society that is not organic enough.<sup>7</sup>

On the other hand, this statement is, in essence, contradictory to the concept of individualism as it was viewed by Rose. Again, Rose was typical of the 19th century critics, for he drew into his socialist argument only the tenets of Carlyle and Ruskin which supported his own opinion and he adapted them to that cause:

Another great merit of Carlyle, Ruskin, and

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<sup>6</sup>Ernest Barker, Political Thought in England (London: Oxford University Press, 1947), pp. 170-1.

<sup>7</sup>Lippincott, op. cit., p. 91.

Henry George lies in the judicial way in which they recognize the respective and reciprocal provinces of Individualism on the one hand, and of State control on the other. This is a quality only second in importance to the fine spirit of affection by which they are inspired. They have, indeed, in this matter struck the happy mean of sobriety and reason. What but the highest perfection of the individual - of every individual - do they seek: And who have more powerfully pleaded for that measure of liberty on which individual perfection depends? But to the conception of individual freedom to do right they add the individual obligation to co-operate with society for the general good. They clearly see that social progress makes the well-being of each more and more the business of all, and, contrariwise, the well-being of all more and more the business of each, so that all may be bound closer and closer together, not in bonds of tyranny, but of affection, bonds like the bond of heaven, which are the signs of true liberty, and the accompaniments of fullest life.<sup>8</sup>

Cazamian, in discussing this problem, came to about the same conclusion, but at the same time he did note the distinction between Carlyle and the socialists and drew a sharper division than did Rose:

Carlyle was among the first to perceive this new truth - the need for organization to correct the anarchy implicit in the unlimited freedom of individual appetites. Many another thinker, following in his wake - Ruskin for example - drew from this perception of Carlyle the tenor of their social doctrine. Carlyle is their precursor and instructor and need share this honor only with the socialist theorists and the warmest hearts of his age.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>Rose, op. cit., p. 137.

<sup>9</sup>Cazamian, op. cit., p. 188.

These contrasts of opinion between two critics can at times be highly amusing. The humour is only dimmed by the confusion which such diverse criticisms convey concerning Carlyle and Ruskin. Rose, for example, could speak of Ruskin as a great optimist when he declared:

If any man believes that this is the best of all possible worlds let him read Carlyle's works with an open mind, and he will soon find that it is tragically the reverse of the best. No man had a more intense conviction of the magnitude of the social and economic evils of his time. ...Carlyle, however, was not a pessimist. His faith in the ultimate triumph of the laws of justice and right, and in the possibilities opening out of the human race, was unbounded. Ruskin, the grandest optimist of modern times, wrote of him in The Crown of Wild Olive, as "Our one clear-sighted teacher."<sup>10</sup>

In contradistinction, however, Collingwood wrote:

It is sometimes imagined that anyone who has a philosophy at all must be either an optimist or a pessimist, and that one of a philosopher's duties is to argue out the issue between these two creeds and decide which to adopt. As a matter of fact optimism and pessimism are not philosophies at all: they are diseases. The reason why one man is an optimist and another a pessimist is not to be sought in philosophical argument; it is to be sought in mental pathology. No philosopher worthy of the name has ever been in the ordinary sense of the word either an optimist or a pessimist; and Ruskin was neither, simply because his philosophical instinct was too sound to let him fall into such snares.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>Rose, op. cit., p. 37.

<sup>11</sup>Robin G. Collingwood, Ruskin's Philosophy (Kendal: T. Wilson & Son, 1922), pp. 40-1.

The question of the relative value of the two men's teachings produced even more divergent opinions from the critics. These opinions ranged from an abhorrence of both writers, through a predominately higher praise for Ruskin, to a refutation and re-evaluation of Carlyle as a social writer. These differences were, of course, entirely natural, for unanimity should be neither the expectation nor the implication of criticism. On the other hand, the contrasting reasons for the superiority of one to the other are interesting. Robertson was one of the most negative critics and with no toleration for either man he said of Ruskin:

Now, it lies on the face of all Ruskin's work, that in him an intense egoism is the condition of his eloquence and energy. At times, certainly, it seems to disappear, in homage to some one of his masters, Carlyle, or another; but even then he identifies his prejudice and theirs, and never does he long abide in the attitude of impersonal concern for a simple truth. In all his polemic, even at its best and justest, is visible his normal inability to conceive, or even suspect, how any life or opinion can be right or good which clashes with his tastes and convictions.<sup>12</sup>

Furthermore, he stated:

Ruskin is, so far as my reading goes, the most self-contradictory writer who ever lived. He stultifies himself as vehemently as Carlyle, and for the same fundamental reason, that he is just a talking temperament; but he meddles with far more matters than Carlyle did, and dogmatizes proportionally.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>John M. Robertson, Modern Humanists ( 1891 ), p. 207.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 208



In criticism in which comparison was made between Carlyle and Ruskin, the latter was judged, generally, to have been the more propitious to study for practicality and logic. The variance in reasons for this however, is considerable. Cook, speaking of the influence of Carlyle on Ruskin's *Letters on Politics*, wrote:

Ruskin's treatment of the theme, if similar in spirit, was more precise and definite than his master's. Ruskin's political writings, now and afterwards, may have been practicable or impracticable; but at any rate they were directed to practical ends; they may have looked towards the sky, but they trod the earth.<sup>14</sup>

Rose's opinion was basically in agreement with that of Cook, but in addition, he gave a reason for the superiority in value of Ruskin. His observations were essentially true in regard to Ruskin's cultural and economic background as compared with Carlyle's; however, these were insufficient both to estimate their differences and to rank them subsequently. Rose stated:

Ruskin is the more profitable to study, not only because he has assimilated much that was best in Carlyle's politico-economic teaching, but because of the greater advantages of culture which he enjoyed; his more extensive knowledge of men and things, and especially because of the facilities which his conditions of life from youth upwards gave him for the study of economic and social science.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>Edward T. Cook, *The Life of John Ruskin* (London: George Allen & Company, 1911), I, p. 275.

<sup>15</sup>Rose, *op. cit.*, p. 76.

Seemingly the most frequent differentiation between the two, though, was the concept that Carlyle saw the problems and Ruskin provided the solutions to them. For example, in his book on the philosophy of Browning, Henry Jones said in describing Carlyle:

But Carlyle was always more able to detect the disease than to suggest the remedy. He had, indeed, 'a glimpse of it'. "There is in man a Higher than love of Happiness: he can do without Happiness, and instead thereof find Blessedness." But the glimpse was misleading, for it penetrated no further than the first negative step. The 'Everlasting Yea' was, after all, only a deeper 'No!' only Entsagung, renunciation...<sup>16</sup>

Earland, in discussing the relationship of the two men, had the same belief, and indeed, stated it in the same words while developing Ruskin's function in the friendship:

Most of the teaching of "Fors" met with Carlyle's approval, but when Ruskin attempted to put his theory into practice by forming St. George's Company, Carlyle did not sympathise. He flatly refused to contribute to the funds, and denounced the scheme as absurd. At first he declined to believe that Ruskin was in earnest, and when his seriousness was proved without a doubt, mourned that so great a man should have his moments of folly. Here it was that the two men who made it their mission in life to point out the plague spots corrupting our social and commercial life differed most essentially. Carlyle was satisfied to point out the disease and leave others to find a cure; Ruskin must needs supply a panacea, and because it was not accepted, he allowed chagrin to prey upon his mind to such an extent that he

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<sup>16</sup>Henry Jones, Browning as a Philosophical and Religious Teacher (Glasgow: James MacLehose & Sons, 1912), p. 85.

lost, for a time, his reason.

Any differences that arose between Ruskin and Carlyle were but minor, and related more to the means by which reforms could be carried out than to any fundamental truths; consequently the general harmony remained undisturbed.<sup>17</sup>

Lippincott, in contrast, felt that Carlyle had made an influential contact on a greater number of people than had Ruskin, but that Ruskin's appeal, while more limited, had a greater effect on a few people. Lippincott's comments are particularly valuable in this respect because he linked worth and relationship of the two men with the fiber of their beliefs rather than with personal qualities. He stated, in specific reference to their interpretations of capitalism that "If Carlyle was the chief critic of the social effects of capitalism, Ruskin next to Marx was the chief critic of its principles."<sup>18</sup> In continuing this idea, he also said:

...Ruskin was unequalled in showing the moral defects of capitalism in general... In fine, Ruskin analyzed both the moral and the social effects of capitalism with far greater precision than any other writer; and this is true even though he did not carry his message to as many minds as did Carlyle.<sup>19</sup>

Finally, Lippincott made an interesting suggestion concerning Carlyle's wider sphere of influence and its connection

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<sup>17</sup>Ada Earland, Ruskin and His Circle (New York: Putnam, 1910), pp. 100-101.

<sup>18</sup>Lippincott, op. cit., p. 54.

<sup>19</sup>Lippincott, op. cit., pp. 54-55.

with the "rewards" that he offered. At first glance this appears to be an unusual concept, for Carlyle, of the two, is generally considered to be the stoic. However, Lippincott said:

Another factor may help to explain why Carlyle exercised a greater influence than Ruskin. Carlyle offered men of industry and commerce greater compensation for the sacrifices he asked them to make. In return for social services, Carlyle conferred heroship upon the middle class; in exchange for the amelioration of social conditions, he consecrated its individualism. Ruskin did not permit the middle class to ransom their self-respect so easily. Ruskin asked the man of industry and commerce not only to adopt measures of socialization, but also to give up profit as a chief incentive; though he promised them the top places in his new society, they were to find their life by losing it.

If Ruskin was not the power that Carlyle was, if he did not stir the moral feelings as effectively as Carlyle, he did more to influence the thinking of a few minds than did the prophet of Chelsea.<sup>20</sup>

In contradistinction to the idea that Carlyle was satisfied simply to point out the disease and ignore a remedy stood Saintsbury. In his chapter on Carlyle in Corrected Impressions, he attempted to refute the prevalent belief in Carlyle's absence of cures for the disease which he diagnosed. Emphasizing the value of Carlyle's negatives, he wrote:

It is, I think, the mistake of demanding a positive gospel instead of negative

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<sup>20</sup>Lippincott, op. cit., p. 56.

warnings in the first place, and in the second the inability to appreciate "the humour of it" to the full, which have been at the root of most recent depreciations of Carlyle, though no doubt also reaction from the violent mannerisms of his style and a not ungenerous but rather unintelligent disgust at the inordinately voluminous and very ill-managed personal revelations of his life must also be allowed for. People have insufficiently appreciated the symbolism which plays so very large a part in his work. The two largest individual parts of that work are occupied, the one with an apotheosis from the point of view of a denouncer of cant of a man who canted against despotism his way to the headship of the Commonwealth of England, and then continued to cant as a despot to the day of his death, the other with the glorification of a selfish and sordid scoundrel whose chief merits were that he had an indomitable will, and could have written a sincere and forcible treatise De Contemptu Vitae. But, by a paradox which I have never been able to make up my mind whether to attribute to a completely or a partially humoristic view, the Cromwell and the Frederick of Carlyle, though he has delineated them for the benefit of other people with a fidelity and a vigour of biographical art beside which even Boswell, even Lockhart, are tame and shadowy, are as objects of admiration pure symbols. The unctuous butcher of Tredagh, who pretended to revenge the massacres committed by the Irish of 1641 on a garrison which he knew to consist very largely of pure English troops, the filibuster of Silesia and the fribble of Reinsberg, who had all vices but those that are amiable and hardly any virtues but those which are unattractive, live as they lived in his pages. Nobody but a mere idiot can accuse Carlyle of garbling out a damning or foisting in a flattering trait. And yet all the while he is glorifying and extolling in the one a symbol of upright humanity, in the



other symbol of patriotic heroism.<sup>21</sup>

Furthermore, Saintsbury continued and pointed out the great maxims which Carlyle offered:

As has been said, or hinted, above, it is not to Carlyle that you must go for positive percepts of any kind. But as a negative teacher he has few equals. "Don't funk; don't cant; don't gush; don't whine; don't chatter;" - these and some others like them were his commandments, and I do not know where to look for a better set of their kind. But they were elementary and trivial in reference to certain larger and vaguer precepts of the Carlylian decalogue or myriologue. The two greatest of these, as it seems to me, are, "Never mistake the amount, infinitesimal if not minus, of your own personal worth and importance in this world", on the one hand, and "Never care for any majority of other infinitesimals who happen to be against you", on the other. Ever since 1789 at least, the idol from which men should have prayed to be kept, and which has been growing year by year and decade by decade, is the worship of the majority; and the cream, the safest and soundest part of the Carlylian doctrine, is: "Don't care one rap, or the ten-thousandth part of one rap, for the majority. You may be - you very likely are - a fool yourself; but it is as nearly as possible certain that the majority of the majority are fools, and therefore, though you need not necessarily set yourself against them, you are absolutely justified in neglecting them." "Do your duty", which he also preached, is of course a more strictly virtuous doctrine, and it is also a much older one. But it is open to the retort, "Yes, but what is my duty?" which is never specially easy and often extremely difficult to answer. Nor is it more specially suited for this day than for any other.

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<sup>21</sup>George Saintsbury, Corrected Impressions, Essays on Victorian Writers (London: William Heinemann, 1895), pp. 46-8.

But "Don't worship the majority" is the very commandment needed in the nineteenth century, and likely, it would seem, to be needed still more in the twentieth. Even if, as it rarely may be, the majority does not make it so, and when there is no reason for believing it to be right except that it is the majority, then that is reason sufficient for electing to regard it as wrong.<sup>22</sup>

While perhaps not wholly logical, Elizabeth Barrett Browning made one of the most effective appeals for recognizing Carlyle's value despite his frequently challenged "lack of remedy". In an undated fragment of a letter to Richard Horne, she spoke to him of Carlyle, writing:

In his ardour for the quality of belief, he is not to separate it from its objects; and although in the remarks on tolerance in his 'Hero Worship' he guards himself strongly from an imputation of latitudinarianism yet we cannot say but that he sometimes overleaps his own fences, and sets us wondering whither he would be speeding. This is the occasion of some disquiet to such of his readers as discern that the truth itself is a more excellent thing than our belief in the truth; and that, a priori, our belief does not make the truth. But it is the effect, more or less, of every abstract consideration that we are inclined to hold the object of abstraction some moments longer in its state of separation and analysis than is at all necessary or desirable. And after all, the right way of viewing the matter is that Mr. Carlyle intends to teach us something, and not everything; and to direct us to a particular instrument, and not to direct us in its specific application. It would be a strange reproach to offer to the morning star, that it does

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<sup>22</sup>Ibid., pp. 55-7.

not shine in the evening.<sup>23</sup>

In addition to the subject-matter of a writer's works, style also plays an important part in the evaluation of an author as a literary artist. Indeed, the neglect of this consideration invalidates for usefulness in the field of literature, a sizeable segment of modern criticism in which the emphasis has been placed almost solely on the writer's personal peccadilloes and mental eccentricities. Both Carlyle and Ruskin, particularly in their own century, were criticized for their highly individual literary style, and again, as in other areas of analysis, they were closely connected by the critics. Both too, as is to be expected, had avid enthusiasts for any aspect of their writings as well as avid detractors. When discussing style, however, the authoritative critics cannot be the men of religion and politics, or the non-professional scholars and writers, particularly women in the nineteenth century, who could be so enjoyable to read for other details. Matthew Arnold, William Brownell, and Edmon Scherer, English, American and French literary critics, formed surprisingly similar judgments about the styles of Carlyle and Ruskin. Closely relating the two men, Brownell wrote:

...there are, I imagine, few moderns of

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<sup>23</sup>Elizabeth B. Browning, Letters of Elizabeth Barrett Browning Addressed to Richard Hengist Horne (London: R. Bentley & Son, 1877, H, pp. 29-32.

unquestioned eminence in whose prose style the aesthetic element can be found too steadily salient, too persistently dominant. Here and there, it is true, this element, though decidedly present, is decidedly not always handled to the best advantage. The prose of Carlyle and Ruskin, for example, "those two grand mannerists upon whom the literature of our neighbors", says Scherer, "so mistakenly plumes itself", is largely responsible for so acid a judgement - if not indeed for their frequent association, though this was, rather vain-gloriously, vaunted by Ruskin himself on other grounds. One can hardly call aesthetic in the usual sense a prose which a critic of Scherer's sobriety can call "a conscious, wilful, calculated jargon", and the author of which has the contempt that Carlyle, willing that the devil should "fly away with" them, showed for the fine arts.<sup>24</sup>

From this Brownell could then conclude that "Certainly the ideal of aesthetic prose is not invalidated by its practice, either exaggerated as so often it appears in Ruskin or eccentric as so largely it figures in Carlyle."<sup>25</sup>

In a series of lectures in America which primarily contrasted Emerson and Carlyle, Arnold gave a detailed criticism of Carlyle's style which, but for the present contradiction of the few Carlyle supporters, was extremely accurate, at least in the concept of popular appreciation. There is a perverse humour, however, in the fact that now Carlyle is read almost solely to experience the uniqueness of his

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<sup>24</sup>William C. Brownell, The Genius of Style (London: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1924), p. 126.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 128

style rather than to absorb his ideas. Of Carlyle's potential immortality, Arnold said:

....Emerson freely promises to Carlyle immortality for his histories. They will not have it. Why? Because the materials furnished to him by that devouring eye of his, and that pourtraying hand, were not wrought in and subdued by him to what his work, regarded as a composition for literary purposes, required. Occuring in conversation, breaking out in familiar correspondence, they are magnificent, inimitable; nothing more is required of them; thus thrown out anyhow, they serve their turn and fulfil their function....For Carlyle's sallies, as the staple of a literary work, become wearisome; and as time more and more applies to Carlyle's works its stringent test, this will be felt more and more. Shakespeare, Moliere, Swift, - they, too, had, like Carlyle, the devouring eye and the pourtraying hand. But they are great literary masters, they are supreme writers, because they knew how to work into a literary composition their materials, and to subdue them to the purposes of literary effect. Carlyle is too wilful for this, too turbid, too vehement.<sup>26</sup>

Lippincott, despite his excellent discussion of the political philosophies of Carlyle and Ruskin, was content to offer only a standard comment on their respective styles. In doing so, he came into opposition with the penetrating criticism of Scherer, especially when Lippincott stressed the logic of Ruskin and his lack of mysticism; factors which indicate that he ignored the later lectures and the digressions so frequent in the last twenty five years of Ruskin's

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<sup>26</sup>Matthew Arnold, Discourses in America (London: Macmillan & Company, 1885), pp. 166-8.



life. Lippincott wrote:

...he was never able to exercise as strong an influence as Carlyle. He was not as great a personality as Carlyle, and he could not equal Carlyle's moral and spiritual appeal... Nor could his style, though it possessed great beauty, engage men's interest as successfully as Carlyle's; it was less romantic and less prophetic; it was clear and never mystical; it was logical and in many respects classical...While Carlyle constantly appealed to emotional symbols, Ruskin generally appealed to ideas....<sup>27</sup>

Scherer, on the other hand, held the converse view, and he linked Carlyle and Ruskin closely, assigning to Carlyle the influence which ruined several potentially great writers. Among other critical comments, Scherer observed:

The influence of Carlyle's mannerism has been considerable. He has given birth to a whole generation of writers, disdainful of that manliness of style which consists in saying things worth saying in the best way possible, and set above all on the refinements of the virtuoso or even the tricks of the charlatan. Some great talents in England have been ruined in the deplorable school. Mr. Ruskin ended like Carlyle himself by passing from the recherche to the bizarre, and from affectation to mere mystifying. Yet there are still some who feel themselves strong enough to be sincere and simple, and they are worth all the more for it. Mr. Matthew Arnold has, I should think, as many ideas in his head as Carlyle, and as much poetry in his soul as Mr. Ruskin, and yet he does not think himself obliged to speak like a mystagogue.<sup>28</sup>

While himself greatly influenced by Scherer's beliefs,

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<sup>27</sup>Lippincott, op. cit., p. 56.

<sup>28</sup>Edmond Scherer, Essays on English Literature (London: Sampson Low, Marston & Company, 1891), pp. 205-6.

Brownell gave a creditable note to Ruskin with a fine distinction between definitions of "style", although in the general full concept which has been discussed, he agreed with Scherer. Drawing this distinction, however, he suggested:

And if later the earlier beauty and purity were thus sacrificed to the essentially, however brilliantly, artificial, it was doubtless because as he, Carlyle, went on he fitted his form to his extravagances of feeling with less and less thought of the qualities of purity and beauty in the abstract. Ruskin's excesses are less defects of style than of personality, manner, mannerism - as Scherer says - becoming thus defects of his style in the gross. The formal element of style in his style is very generally beautifully handled, especially its movement.<sup>29</sup>

J. B. Priestly, however, in his recent book, Literature and Western Man, had only praise for Ruskin's style, and he happily lauded Proust's adaptation of its form and spirit into French. Priestly wrote that,

....Whether he was writing about the works of Turner or the Alps, medieval cathedrals or political economy, Ruskin was a magnificent stylist, returning triumphantly to the immense sentences of the seventeenth-century prose-men, though easier and more secure in his management of relative clauses than most of them ever were, in a style rich to the eye, exquisite to the ear.<sup>30</sup>

In general evaluations of the two men by authors who were not writing as critics in a specific field, the diversity of opinions and contradictions is still of great

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<sup>29</sup>Brownell, op. cit., p. 127.

<sup>30</sup>John B. Priestly, Literature and Western Man (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1960), p. 200.

scope. A certain prejudice in favor of either Carlyle or Ruskin could be expected in the critics, but at times its blatancy appears overdone and suggests that few of these men were scholarly readers.

These varying criticisms are interesting, however, despite the cumulative confusion which they might cause. Primarily concerned with politics and economics, the examples given here generally show a viewpoint favouring Ruskin. In John Ruskin, Social Reformer, Hobson said of him:

Such a conception of history and of government brought him into necessary collision with modern liberal democracy, with its formula of "natural equality", and drove him, as it drove Carlyle, into frequent assertions of an opposite doctrine of "natural slavery"...There is indeed reason to hold that Mr. Ruskin is much nearer to the more enlightened Liberals of his day and ours than he is willing to admit. The overbearing influence of Carlyle upon his politics is chiefly confined to the acceptance of a common terminology, and somewhat vague but violent attacks upon the revolutionary formula of the eighteenth century. With Carlyle he jeers at Parliament as an idle "talking-shop", and occasionally warns working men not to trust to it for reforms; but after all his only definite suggestion for getting good government is by suffrage of the body of citizens.<sup>31</sup>

In contrast to this "only definite suggestion" as used by Hobson is the analysis by Harrison which is more severely detrimental to Carlyle:

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<sup>31</sup>John A. Hobson, John Ruskin: Social Reformer (London: James Nisbet & Company, 1898), p. 189.

'No! nor did Sartor Resartus convert the British public, which hardly understood a quarter of the Philosophy of Clothes, according to the Apostle of Chelsea. But Sartor, which appeared when Ruskin was a lad, had profoundly affected the tone of Englishmen in the last two generations, and Ruskin was himself the most notable product of the Carlyle creed. Carlyle, in his apocalyptic way, anathematised the "dismal science", and consigned to Tophet the political economists. But it was the eloquence of Ruskin - the wit, the ingenuity, the lyrical passion and apostolic faith in his mission - which was wanted. Carlyle had neither the patience nor the analytic and logical precision required to deal methodically with the terms and dogmas of the older plutonomists. Maurice had poured out eloquent sermons, and Kingsley had given voice in some passionate poetry and fiction; but no one before Ruskin had set himself to test by careful analysis "the idea that an advantageous code of social action may be determined irrespectively of the influence of social affection." His essays were begun in 1860 and it would not be easy to find any serious book in that sense of an earlier date than this.'<sup>32</sup>

The following and more recent criticism is a fascinating contradiction of both Hobson and Harrison. Hobson had said that the influence of Carlyle on Ruskin's politics was limited to "a common terminology, and somewhat vague but violent attacks upon the revolutionary formula of the eighteenth century." Harrison stressed Carlyle's limitations and the gain beyond them made by Ruskin. Roe, nonetheless, linked Carlyle and Ruskin far more closely when he said of the latter:

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<sup>32</sup>Frederic Harrison, Tennyson, Ruskin, Mill and Other Literary Estimates (London: Macmillan & Company, 1899), pp. 100-1.

His outlook upon the political movements of his day thus corresponded exactly with Carlyle's. By gross misgovernment the aristocracy had deservedly lost the respect of the lower orders, who were now threatening to overthrow the constitution and to substitute a republic, which Ruskin could only look upon as political anarchy. As he read the signs of the times, if this movement went on unchecked, with increasing extravagance among the upper classes and with increased license among the lower, the only way out, after the populace had had its day of democracy, was to set up, for a time, a military despotism as the fore-runner of genuine reconstruction, - a Carlylean interpretation of events through and through.<sup>33</sup>

The views of Hobson and Harrison in contrast to Roe were even more emphatically reinforced by Robertson who surpassed both in acknowledging Ruskin as Carlyle's superior. This partiality makes him almost valueless as a serious critic, as, for example, when he stated:

I have said that Ruskin, as a social teacher, wields a more intense and impressive influence than any of his contemporaries. He does this by virtue of his two great qualifications of literary style and luminousness of exposition, within the range of his accurate vision.... As a writer he is to Carlyle as Apollo to a Titan, a born consummate master where the other is a gigantic wrestler; and he can reach effects of which Carlyle never dreamed...And just as he transcends Carlyle in word-magic, so does he transcend him in the blazing force of his criticism of modern English life, where he sees true and aims straight. His preparation, in the close study of relations in the department of aesthetics, seems to give him an abnormal power of seeing and representing in groups and masses the connections of our industrial

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<sup>33</sup>Frederick W. Roe, The Social Philosophy of Carlyle and Ruskin (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1921), pp. 250-1.



life, which Carlyle only saw under a few ethical headings, though he too had the pictorial eye. Carlyle, at bottom a Puritan, is always running into ethical metaphor, where Ruskin, tingling under a primary aesthetic stimulus, gives us in a flash the actual facts.<sup>34</sup>

That Ruskin and Carlyle traveled individual philosophic paths was acknowledged and indeed emphasized by the majority of critics. The area in which the separation occurred, however, was ascribed to variant factors. A few of these have already been seen in parts of other quoted criticisms, but the two following are of particular interest for the contrast they present. Cook, one of the greatest Ruskin scholars, augmented this statement at other times, but it was nevertheless indicative of his belief:

The importance of individual character, the value of work in forming it, the supremacy of duty in directing it: these are some of the leading moral lessons which Mr. Ruskin, like Carlyle, has had to teach, but to which he has given a new turn by adding the sanction of Art. It used to be thought that the "condition of England question" would be solved by the ballot-box, by fresh liberties, by new laws. Not so, said Carlyle. Not so, says Mr. Ruskin. In life, as in Art, the only liberty worth having is founded on personal discipline. This is why Mr. Ruskin lays so much stress on the dignity and usefulness of manual labour.<sup>35</sup>

Writing of a somewhat different area, Hobson nevertheless saw the divergence between Carlyle and Ruskin as derived

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<sup>34</sup>Robertson, op. cit., pp. 194-5.

<sup>35</sup>Edward T. Cook, Studies in Ruskin (London: George Allen, 1891), p. 25.

from a completely different source which made a low evaluation of Carlyle implicit. Hobson wrote:

Mr. Ruskin himself seems hardly to recognize how far his historic and economic criticism had removed him from Carlyle. The latter's scorn for political economy had hidden from his eyes certain deep truths which Mr. Ruskin had unearthed. Carlyle had indeed certain intuitive glimpses of the economic power which the governing classes abused for their private enjoyment: his healthy respect for work led him to condemn idleness, history taught him the demoralising effects of luxury, and so he came to suspect the power of the landowner and the rich commercial class. But he never dived into the intricacies of the connection between politics and industry as Mr. Ruskin did.<sup>36</sup>

The criticisms of the critics which this chapter contains are not meant to disparage the men or their frequently excellent books, but to illustrate the nebulous relationship in which Carlyle and Ruskin are still seen. For one concerned with this particular aspect of their lives, the biographical and critical evidence can remain confusing. An attempt to gather this information from Collingwood is an example. A Ruskin enthusiast, Collingwood wrote, among others, two highly competent works about him. From Ruskin's Philosophy, it will not be pedantic to note two opposing statements. First, Collingwood said:

This, then, is the paradox to which I referred at the outset: that Ruskin not only never wrote on philosophy, but actually avoided it, with a deliberation due not to indifference but to reasoned

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<sup>36</sup>Hobson, op. cit., pp. 190-1.

hostility.<sup>37</sup>

Shortly thereafter, he stated:

If it was his philosophy that deprived him of other intellectual companionship, it was his philosophy that gave him the one friendship which can truly be called by that name. Carlyle was a student of German philosophy, but Ruskin specially exempts him from the curse which he lays upon philosophers generally. Why was this? It is a curious fact that Carlyle was not, like Coleridge, a Kantian. He was a follower of Fichte, and with Fichte the process had already begun which transmutes Kant into Hegel. In some ways Fichte is nearer to Ruskin than to the Kantians whom they both detested.<sup>38</sup>

This, in truth, is a minor point and, out of context, is possibly more serious than in actuality. In the work of another Collingwood, William G. Collingwood's The Life and Work of John Ruskin, however, the confusion about the relationship still becomes greater, for with a different attitude, Collingwood wrote:

So in this century, Johnson's spiritual successor, Carlyle, from a similar lack of sympathy with art and an indolence in acquiring even the rudiments of physical science, from a strange want of ear for poetry and eye for nature, - was left short-handed, short-sighted, in many an enterprise. In framing an ideal of life he is narrow, ascetic, rude, as compared with the wider and more refined culture of Ruskin.

Since about 1850, Carlyle had been gradually becoming more and more friendly with Mr. Ruskin; and now that his social and

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<sup>37</sup>Collingwood, op. cit., p. 4.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., p. 30.

economical work had been taken up, he began to have a real esteem for him, though always with a patronising tone, which the younger man's open and confessed discipleship accepted and encouraged.<sup>39</sup>

The letter of Carlyle to Ruskin later quoted by Collingwood in this work cannot, though, be considered patronizing.<sup>40</sup>

The concept of happiness which was thoroughly explored by both Carlyle and Ruskin is an extremely important aspect in the relationship of the two men and as such will be carefully analysed in the following section. On the other hand, critical mention of this facet with a particular contrast between Carlyle and Ruskin is rare and usually superficial. Thus the wide disparity of opinion between even a few critics is of special interest. In speaking solely of Carlyle, Matthew Arnold presented a viewpoint which represented, in essence, Carlyle's philosophy and problem concerning happiness:

Happiness in labour, righteousness, and veracity, - in the life of the spirit, - here was a gospel still for Carlyle to preach, and to help others by preaching. But he baffled them and himself by preferring the paradox that we are not born for happiness at all.<sup>41</sup>

In his Social Philosophy of Carlyle and Ruskin, however, Roe assumed for Carlyle a vastly different idea which united the

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<sup>39</sup>William G. Collingwood, The Life and Work of John Ruskin (London: Methuen and Company, 1893), II, p. 34.

<sup>40</sup>For reference, several of these Carlyle letters have been given in this thesis. Re: Queen of the Air, p.58; re: Fors Clavigera, p. 64; re: Val d'Arno, p. 62.

<sup>41</sup>Arnold, op. cit., p. 202.

beliefs of Ruskin and Carlyle with complete harmony. Even the shade of difference in meaning between happiness and enjoyment does not obstruct Roe's obvious contradiction of Arnold. Roe stated that:

In thus making man's insight, intellectual as well as moral, depend upon a right state of heart, Carlyle was at one with Ruskin, who compressed the whole doctrine into a single golden sentence: "The entire object of true education is to make people not merely do the right things, but enjoy the right things: not merely industrious, but to love industry - not merely learned, but to love knowledge - not merely pure, but to love purity - not merely just, but to hunger and thirst after justice."<sup>42</sup>

Lippincott maintained yet a third view which, while it differed only subtly with Arnold's, clashed strongly with Roe's opinion. Lippincott included righteousness as an integral element of Carlyle's philosophy whereas Arnold denied it, but they were in agreement that happiness was excluded. That Ruskin's thought was not motivated from a religious source is the questionable portion of Lippincott's statement, at least in contrast to other critics. However, about happiness he wrote:

Ruskin's thought did not spring from a religious base, as did Carlyle's. Though morality was fundamental to his view, righteousness was not the aim of man, as it was for Carlyle. Ruskin believed in right conduct, but also in happiness; in fact, he held that happiness was the ideal at which man should aim.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>42</sup>Roe, op. cit., p. 91.

<sup>43</sup>Lippincott, op. cit., p. 67.



Differences such as those just noted are basically ones of an interpretative nature and fall within the scope of a literary inquiry. They are at least amenable to a rational analysis, the result of which if not definitive, can perhaps clarify and explain the major differences. The same cannot be said of more recent critics who have examined the lives of Carlyle and Ruskin as psychological studies and, consequently, have furnished new explanations for their personal philosophies and the material which Carlyle and Ruskin wrote. Unfortunately, the reliability of much of the information used is highly questionable and the value of the result in assessing the authors as literary or politico/economic figures is negligible. The purpose of these analyses is often dubious; in fact, Gascoyne was correct when he stated:

For the time being, his (Carlyle's) situation is much the same as that of another great Victorian prose writer, Ruskin; if either of them is referred to, it is often for the purpose of drawing attention to the pitiable or distasteful nature of his character and private life; what interests modern critics seems to be far less what they had to say than the unsuccessful nature of their marriages.<sup>44</sup>

Perhaps the best example of this type of criticism as directly applied to Carlyle and Ruskin is by Gaylord LeRoy

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<sup>44</sup>David E. Gascoyne, Thomas Carlyle, A Critical Essay (Supplement to British Book News: No. 23, 1952) p. 8.

in Perplexed Prophets. He admits the close relationship of the two men and their concern with the social problems of England. He does not, however, accept their ideas for their value in ameliorating the situation or even their statements for their value simply as ideas. Instead, he connects their writings with their psychological motivation and in so doing denies their sincerity and real applicability to their era. While it is admissible that "In different ways, and with different results, the thought of Carlyle and Ruskin was shaped also by the way they responded to what seemed to them opposing kinds of significance in modern society",<sup>45</sup> it is not acceptable as a literary evaluation that:

The principal reason for Ruskin's ineffectiveness in constructive criticism was that, like Carlyle, he was imprisoned by the psychic authoritarianism of his upbringing....

But Ruskin could never for long think of the free drives of man's nature as anything but dangerous....Unable to construct an image of the good society except in the guise of the wise paternalism of his home, Ruskin could not, save for sporadic flashes of insight, consider a democratic solution to the problems of Victorian Society; he reverted instead to the image of a hierarchy where each man gives orders to those below him and in turn carries out in obedience the wishes of captain, leader, bishop, or king. For those who did not fit into such a scheme, repression or punishment was the only treatment. Like Carlyle, Ruskin regards the criminal not with understanding but with the same vindictiveness as he directs

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<sup>45</sup>Gaylord C. LeRoy, Perplexed Prophets: Six 19th Century British Authors (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press for Temple University Publications, 1953), p. 7.

toward his own unsanctioned impulses.<sup>46</sup>

In addition to the highly dubious scientific process from which LeRoy produces this and the following observations, he is censurable for the positive values that he, through his method, ignores. His system focuses attention almost solely on flaws of character and mentality. It fails to consider as important the altruism and humanitarianism which might occur as pure intellectual or philosophic essences. His technique relegates to a minor role the possible influence on Carlyle, for example, of Goethe, Fichte and many other writers through intellectual reasoning unbiased by the emotional ties of his early life and his family. LeRoy also uses this family concept with Ruskin, stating:

Like Carlyle, he (Ruskin) used an image of human relationship generated within the family - the image of an organic, tightly related, responsible society - as a criterion by which to judge the social relationships of contemporary England. The divergence between the image and the actuality gave rise to the anxiety, dismay, and fury a man feels when a conception that has neurotic importance for him is threatened. At the same time the intensity of feeling that accompanied the revolt of long-suppressed instinctual drives was diverted toward the object of immediate attack in his criticism. The tone, the emotional power, and to a great extent the ideas of Ruskin's social criticism are to be explained, then, in terms of his neurotic nature.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>46</sup>Ibid., pp. 97-8.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., p. 92.

In addition, this psychological probing, carried to the extremes which LeRoy employs, has other disadvantages. A major deterrent is the terminology which is commonly used. Too many of the words and descriptions carry technical definitions which limit their proper comprehension to the expert in a field generally unrelated to literature. The vagueness in meaning which can result is evident when LeRoy states:

As with Carlyle, Ruskin's attitudes were shaped in the main by powerful internal conflicts; he did not, like Arnold, have sufficient relative integration so that the conflicts the age imposed were among the most serious that beset him.<sup>48</sup>

A further drawback to this method of analysis is the difficulty of substantiating the theses of the psychologists. A criticism of the works of Carlyle and Ruskin from the premise that these authors were neurotic and ill-adjusted is far less stable than a criticism derived only from written sources. Thus, LeRoy is on unsafe ground when he contends that:

In a sense the reason for the failure in constructive criticism was the same for Carlyle, Ruskin, and Arnold. These authors had only a limited trust in people and were consequently unwilling to commit themselves to the democratic solution of the problem before them. It may well be that the only workable solution to the problem all these critics faced was an extension of democracy, through economic as well as political measures, to the large mass excluded from its benefits. Ruskin and Carlyle were unable

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<sup>48</sup>Ibid., p. 87.

to advocate this approach to the problem of the age because of a psychic nature that developed in each of them a profound distrust of people.<sup>49</sup>

From another view, a limited use of this type of analysis integrated in a broader study and playing a subordinate role can be valuable for a deeper understanding of Carlyle and Ruskin. Evans, particularly in her comments throughout the Diaries interprets many passages using Ruskin's illness as a base of reference. Quennell, too, in John Ruskin, Portrait of a Prophet utilizes a knowledge of psychology. Yet, like Evans, Quennell does not found his understanding of Ruskin or Carlyle on this scientific

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<sup>49</sup>Ibid., p. 174. The length to which this process can be carried is further illustrated in a complex passage by LeRoy, Ibid., pp. 170-2: "The perils of the new society were accurately diagnosed and powerfully assailed by Carlyle at the outset of the new period, and by Ruskin during the decades of its peak popularity. Both writers brought to their criticism of industrialism an intensity of feeling attributable in part to the anxiety with which a neurotic nature responds to a threat to its precariously sustained ideals, for in both instances the social relationships of industrialism were in the sharpest contrast with an image of human relations which performed an indispensable role in the author's personality.... Carlyle's distrust of instinct and his need for authority led him eventually to a contempt for ordinary humanity that alienates most readers today, to condemnation of democratic principle and the parliamentary process, to adulation of the hero, and advocacy of the gospel of salvation through renunciation, obedience, and work.... In Ruskin, however, formidable personality conflicts manifested themselves later than with Carlyle, and Ruskin did not, like Carlyle, develop a consistent way of dealing with them. In his social attitudes, in consequence, he exhibits now trust in, now fear of the people, depending upon whether spontaneous drives or repressive forces are for the moment uppermost. But the only solution to the personal problem which offered Ruskin anything approaching security was to strengthen the principle of repression and control, and in



analysis, but employs it to further the picture of the two men gained from written materials. Throughout the book, he maintains a sympathy with Ruskin which, while scholarly, is not apathetic or coldly analytical. Of the friendship of Carlyle and Ruskin he writes:

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his social philosophy authoritarianism became in consequence almost as prominent as in Carlyle's though less consistently exhibited.

"The likeness between Carlyle and Ruskin tempts one to suggest a generalization as to a necessary relationship between an authoritarian personality structure and a conservative political philosophy. But the fact is that the same personal characteristics are to be observed in those political revolutionaries who are driven by psychic revolt to struggle against authority in the state but are also driven by their need for inner authority to set up a new principle of rigorous political control. Many of the revolutionaries of the seventeenth century were probably men with this type of psychological make-up, and the type is not unknown today. Similarly, one cannot generalize that persons with strong ego development - those who are able to handle comfortably their own spontaneity and who can make and carry out plans without neurotic influence - must necessarily adopt a democratic philosophy. These tempting simplifications must be avoided. A background of privilege, for example, by making possible a sense of mastery of the environment, contributes to strong ego development, but at the same time privilege is likely to predispose the individual to a conservative political philosophy. A background of privation, similarly, by depriving the individual of the power to handle his environment with competence and freedom, may impair ego development, but at the same time privations will often predispose the individual to a radical political philosophy. Perhaps the only safe generalization that can be made, therefore, is that other things being equal a man who has strength enough to trust himself will trust his fellow men and will therefore find a democratic outlook congenial, while a person with highly developed super-ego who fears his instinctive nature, is likely to distrust ordinary humanity and to feel the need for a strong authority within society, and he may well, therefore, like Carlyle and Ruskin, adopt an antidemocratic political philosophy."

Yet it would be wrong to assume that he (Ruskin) was invariably downcast. Human companionship, when it was of the right sort, had still the power of cheering him; and with Carlyle and "some ladies, and a few favourite children" (as Norton had already remarked) his spirits were "exuberant". The choice of companions is revealing; and Carlyle's place in his affections deserves especial notice. Here Ruskin's attitude was that of a devoted son; he addressed the older man as his "Dearest Papa" - a degree of familiarity that the prophet would no doubt have rebuffed in a less attractive correspondent;...His love, in fact, looked upwards or downwards; and, just as it suited him to look up to Carlyle - a majestic parental figure, not unlike those august figures who had loomed above his boyhood - so he was naturally inclined to moods of tender patronage.<sup>50</sup>

Quennell also relates their friendship with their similar philosophies and temperaments when he states:

For Carlyle, as he came to know him better, Ruskin was to acquire a warm and almost filial sympathy. In the older man he recognised a spirit that, like his own, could find no peace among the conditions that modern life imposed upon it: a temper naturally demanding, naturally dogmatic, shaped by the influence of early parental discipline, which had implanted a respect for authority without preparing the ground for any real submission. He saw a man moreover who, like himself, was a victim of a deep interior discord, who professed to despise the happiness he could not achieve, who, indeed, at the mere mention of the word "happiness" was inclined to flare up angrily, as at the gratuitous introduction of some improper and unworthy subject. And then Carlyle, too, was an artist, however unwillingly,

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<sup>50</sup>Peter Quennell, John Ruskin, the Portrait of a Prophet (London: Collins, 1949), pp. 183-4.

however resentfully, with however many flashes of crude deliberate philistinism.<sup>51</sup>

As does LeRoy, Quennell discusses the soul-searching of Carlyle and Ruskin in their attempts to find a philosophy which would allow them contentment. Unlike LeRoy, however, he avoids generally the theorization in which LeRoy becomes entangled:

From this "Dark Night of the Ego" - Carlyle, one often suspects, was inclined to mistake the discomfort of a baffled egotism for the writhings of a tormented soul - the moment has come to return to the complementary case of Ruskin. Both prophets were unhappy men - unhappy not so much because the circumstances of their external lives were thwarting and embittering, as because within themselves they could find no peace and quiet, no refuge from a mysterious sense of guilt and no means of establishing a truce between antagonistic private impulses. They were teachers who could not be taught; and, although they pronounced doctrines and promulgated laws, they were unable to discover any law or rule that would ensure their own tranquillity. Each searched in vain for a clue; but to his search Ruskin brought a temperament more elastic, more variously endowed, more feminine than that of Carlyle. For Carlyle's outlook had a peasant harshness. He loved the written word, its sonority and beauty; to other forms of art he was entirely blind; and against the sensuous charm of the physical universe - all those exquisite minor graces to be discovered by the aesthetic eye in the world of man and nature - his imagination was obstinately closed, since his puritan upbringing had taught him that spontaneous, light-hearted satisfaction must be almost always harmful. Ruskin, on the other hand, did not lack light-heartedness. He appreciated the surface of life, derived exquisite sensuous pleasure from a thousand fleeting inci-

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<sup>51</sup>Ibid., pp. 112-3.

dents, and responded, though at a distance and with much reserve, to the shock of human passions. He could not dismiss the belief that mankind in general, himself included, might still be free and happy.<sup>52</sup>

Quennell's use of this science remains within the limit of value which allows it to be considered a literary study. His is the successful interpretation and understanding of an often hindering rather than enlightening field.

In contrast to the psychological approach, the purely literary analyses remain the most valuable. Those of the Victorian age which divorced themselves from the emotionalism and bias so often present, and many of those of recent years retain an important place in helping an understanding of the relationship between Carlyle and Ruskin. Richard Herne Shepherd, Carlyle's contemporary and friend, managed to maintain an awareness of Carlyle's short-comings and an impartiality toward them. He was, at the same time, acutely penetrating when discussing Ruskin's friendship with Carlyle, for he wrote:

At this period (1860's) Carlyle was visited by the distinguished writer on art who for some years previously had been more and more coming under his direct influence. Between the author of Modern Painters and the historian of Friedrich there were many points of sympathy as well as some points of divergence. Carlyle, it is true, knew little and cared less than nothing for art as art, regarding it as idle dilettantism; and at an earlier period he would probably have received

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<sup>52</sup>Ibid., pp. 116-7.



with a good deal of indifference, incred-  
 ulity, and amazement, theories and  
 enthusiasms which the bitter experience  
 of life had by this time schooled  
 Mr. Ruskin to repress or keep well in the  
 background. But on the other hand  
 Mr. Ruskin's mind had been more and more  
 growing into sympathy and unison with  
 Carlyle's denunciations of shams and  
 "shoddy", of rebellion and disorder, and  
 of the social and political tendencies  
 of the time; and he himself in his recent  
 writings had been more and more subordinat-  
 ing mere aesthetic questions to these press-  
 ing and urgent practical ones. Those  
 points of strong agreement would alone have  
 sufficed to create a modus vivendi, if  
 nothing more, between these two remarkable  
 men. But the younger was ready to sit at  
 the feet of the elder as a Gamaliel; and  
 to have gained a disciple so famous and so  
 much after his own heart could not to  
 Carlyle be a matter of indifference.<sup>53</sup>

Shepherd was one of the few writers of the nineteenth century  
 who showed this respect for both Carlyle and Ruskin. The  
 majority of the critics were concerned with championing the  
 perfections of one writer to the detriment of the other or  
 disparaging both to the critic's own advantage.

In the present century, some of the few criticisms  
 which linked Carlyle and Ruskin have been excellent. Joan  
 Evans has been more effective than anyone else in creating  
 a clear concept of Ruskin's life and beliefs, and she too  
 discusses Carlyle with detached scholarship and that same  
 sympathy which Shepherd evinced for Ruskin. She discusses

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<sup>53</sup>Richard H. Shepherd, Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Thomas Carlyle (London: W.H. Allen & Company, 1881), pp. 245-7.



their relationship from the totality of their works and links them strongly on a philosophic basis independent of any psychological elements. She traces Carlyle's influence from the shift in the nature of Ruskin's writing, stating:

When he returned in October (1860) he went again to Winnington, and spent most of the autumn there, preparing The Elements of Perspective for the press, a book based on his experience of teaching at the Working Men's College and of an entirely practical kind. It represented the slack water between the two tides of Ruskin's creative writing: the first inspired by Turner, intended to change men's view of art, and the second, inspired by Carlyle, intended to change men's view of society.<sup>54</sup>

Evans is also aware of the influence of other writers on Ruskin and gives them credit which is generally neglected in this century because of their own partial obscurity. Yet at the same time she notes Ruskin's own ideas and style which gave him an individuality separate from any of the men who influenced his thought. At the same time, a comparison between Evans' evaluations and those of the "personality analysis school" indicates that Evans' literary criticism is logical and, through study and documentation, contains valid conclusions for which checks can be established; factors which are less evident in the writings of the psychologists. Of the writers who influenced Ruskin, Evans writes:

Ruskin's views were in fact influenced by those of other socialist writers, notably

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<sup>54</sup>Joan Evans, John Ruskin (London: Cape, 1954), p. 257.

Robert Owen, but he neither quoted them nor based his arguments upon their premises. Nearly twenty years had passed since Carlyle in Past and Present had sounded the note: 'England is full of wealth, of multifarious produce, supply for human want in every kind; yet England is dying of inanition.' It was Carlyle who had taught him that 'this successful industry of England, with its plethoric wealth, has as yet made nobody rich; it is an enchanted wealth, and belongs yet to nobody.'

Ruskin took Carlyle's gospel of Truth, Sincerity and Nobleness (Cook, *Studies*, p. 3) and applied it to fresh spheres. He owed something, too, to Maurice and the Christian Socialists with whose ideas he had come into contact at the Working Men's College. Like most Englishmen of his time he had turned to criticize the Gradgrind school of thought from Dickens. Yet his point of view - the point of view of a man whose social conscience had been roused by his sense that the happiness of the workman was a necessary element in the creation of beauty - was necessarily different from that held by any of these; and he wielded a pen with a skill learned in other fields than theirs.<sup>55</sup>

Other critics have successfully used the strictly literary train of influence and thus have pointed out a cohesive relationship between Carlyle and Ruskin and other writers based strictly on the philosophic content of their works. Carlyle's path from the Germans as well as his relationship in the same way to writers in England and America was noted by Jackson, who stated:

The most powerful influence and in other ways the most remarkable member of the group (Carlyle, Ruskin, Morris, Emerson, Thoreau, Whitman) was Thomas Carlyle. Through Emerson and Ruskin he gave a new

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<sup>55</sup>Ibid., p. 260.

quality to the minds of the others by emphasizing the more obvious causes of nineteenth-century discontents, and the mystical element of his moral teaching had a wide if vague influence, under the name of Transcendentalism, especially among the New England writers of the first half of the century. Carlyle, himself, was not influenced by the other members of the group. His intellectual descent is from Goethe and Jean Paul Richter, and it was principally through him that nineteenth-century English thought was deflected from its Latin (largely French) to the Teutonic ancestry.<sup>56</sup>

Jackson failed to add, however, that Ruskin was an exception to this Teutonic deflection inasmuch as he consistently discredited German philosophers while supporting Plato and the Latin philosophers in particular. As was noted previously, Ruskin excluded only Carlyle from his denunciation of German philosophy. In the historical scene, Jackson saw Carlyle and Ruskin united by concepts first shattered in the French Revolution and consequently strenuously attacked in Britain. The ideas of Past and Present and Ruskin's medieval pictures of France and Italy were the antithesis of Britain's social progress, especially as it was spurred on by the Industrial Revolution. Jackson said of the situation:

Carlyle, Ruskin, and Morris are authoritarians in revolt against forces which are destroying the remnants of a benevolent feudal system which had received its death-blow in the French Revolution, but which they think could be revived in an

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<sup>56</sup>Holbrook Jackson, Dreamers of Dreams (London: Faber and Faber, 1948), p. 11.

improved version.<sup>57</sup>

Jackson, however, was equally aware of the differences which existed between Carlyle and Ruskin. His analysis of their distinctness is particularly good because he traced it solely from their beliefs as expressed in their writings:

...although Ruskin hails Carlyle as his Master, there are differences in their methods and remedies. Carlyle believes in moral salvation by work, hard work and plenty of it. Ruskin qualifies the prescription by associating work with aesthetics. Unlike Carlyle, he does not believe that money is the root of the evil. He regards money as evil when we seek to make more of it rather than much of it. Nor is there hope alone from the Carlylean faith in supermen. We are more likely to find a remedy in the consistent pursuit of good living by lesser-men, each doing his best for the love of doing it and not for pecuniary reward.<sup>58</sup>

Jackson realized, too, that although these differences did exist, they were not incompatible with a unity of ideas and purpose which Ruskin and Carlyle shared in the total scope of their beliefs. In writing of this he said:

The fundamental characteristic of Ruskin's teaching is the welding of aesthetics and ethics into a doctrine of social as distinct from financial values. In this teaching he is furthest removed from his master, yet in contact with the chosen enemy of both - the political economist.<sup>59</sup>

One last critic is to be considered here. Leon's biography, Ruskin, the Great Victorian is of interest because

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<sup>57</sup>Ibid., p. 36.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid., p. 95.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., p. 96.

of the slightly contrasting picture which it presents to Jackson's view of the relationship of Carlyle and Ruskin. Leon felt that a looser tie existed between the two men than the close bond that Jackson developed. While admitting the considerable influence of Carlyle on Ruskin, Leon assigned to it a different reason which lessens its intensity. He wrote:

Perhaps the prophet of Chelsea was gratified to see no many of his own ideas assimilated into the body of his young friend's ideas: but although Ruskin was much influenced by Carlyle, the sympathy between them was based rather upon an essential similarity of attitude, and Ruskin never feared to make it clear to his friend that often he had arrived at similar conclusions although traveling by a different route.<sup>60</sup>

At a later point, Leon also discussed the Froude-Norton controversy and suggested that Ruskin's criticisms of Carlyle were in effect accurate although in no way reflecting on the friendship itself. At the same time he implied an independence of outlook which denied too close a relationship:

Nevertheless, Ruskin's view of Carlyle was never a merely sentimental one; as is evident from his attitude to the controversy that followed the publication of Froude's Life; and particularly in the matter of Charles Eliot Norton's denunciation, over which Ruskin wholly took Froude's part against his old friend, maintaining that Froude's portrait of the Prophet was correct and just, save for the fact that Carlyle had never been as unhappy as he liked to make

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<sup>60</sup>Derrick Leon, Ruskin, the Great Victorian (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1949), p. 240.



out; but he had a wretched digestion and the habit of always talking about his grievances. Always deeply aware of his own failures and limitations, Ruskin was very rarely deceived as to essential character, but able to separate the virtues and the weaknesses in the characters of his friends, and to love the one while almost completely ignoring the other.<sup>61</sup>

Taken as a whole, therefore, critical analysis of the relationship between Carlyle and Ruskin is poor. Material on this confined aspect of the two is limited. Furthermore, the information is frequently emotional, biased or it rests on foundations which have little valid place in literary interpretations. Especially noticeable in these assessments of the relationship is the tendency to ignore or to fail to give due weight to the works of Carlyle and Ruskin which are the authoritative written expressions of their beliefs. As such, their writings must remain the definitive source of information.

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<sup>61</sup>Ibid., p. 386.

## CHAPTER IV

## THE WRITINGS OF CARLYLE AND RUSKIN: AN EXAMINATION

The ambiguous interpretations which may be garnered from the critics and from the authors' commentaries perhaps are quite apparent by now. With justification, too, an evaluation of the relationship between the two men well might be drawn and defended from the information presented. Yet this would be an injustice to their writings which should give the clearest answer to the problem.

In this section, six facets in the beliefs of Carlyle and Ruskin will be examined closely. These explorations into their philosophies will be developed solely from the published works. The beliefs to be studied reflect, generally, areas that were of concern to both authors. An intense love of art, alone of these topics, was maintained only by Ruskin, and this will be discussed as a point of divergence.

The related concepts of happiness and of God and religion as seen by Carlyle and Ruskin are worth investigation because of the important place which they assumed in each man's philosophy. They are, in fact, also connected with the social and political beliefs that were espoused in the writings. Of particular interest here are the ideas on the function of the individual in government and how he governs. The necessity and duty of man to work are included as an important topic. Finally, the effect

of industrialism on society and the individual as seen by Carlyle and Ruskin will be discussed.

Once again, it is necessary to stress the difficulty of determining a definitely unified development in the beliefs of Ruskin as one studies them throughout all that he wrote. His passionate espousal of new causes and ideas, along with his sorrow and indignation at social injustices, led him to refute, even unconsciously, the ideas of a time past. New thoughts were brought forth which supported his present argument. Age, rather than encouraging a continuous and maturing philosophic development, stimulated instead an increasing irrationality because of his precarious mental state. Torrents of words were spoken at lectures and put into print that reflected an emotionalism which replaced logic. A most valid judgment was set forth by Charles Eliot Norton who, in a letter to Leslie Stephen, observed that:

...If it depended upon me, there would be no further word of Ruskin or about him given to the public. Enough is known. He printed or allowed to be printed far too much. I have never known a life less wisely controlled, or less helped by the wisdom of others than his. The whole retrospect of it is pathetic; waste, confusion, ruin of one of the most gifted and sweetest natures the world ever knew. He was a kind of angel gone astray; meant for the thirteenth century, he got delayed on the way, and when he finally arrived was a white-winged anachronism.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Charles Eliot Norton, Letters of Charles Eliot Norton (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1913), II, pp. 291-2.

Care thus must be taken to select references which will impart a sense of that which Ruskin presents as an overall belief; a compendious sense derived from the scope of his thinking or writing.

The nineteenth century was proving to be a troubled one in which traditional religious beliefs, among many others, were being cast aside and in which men either were struggling to find a direction for their lives, or else, in too many cases, were unconcerned with any but the most material considerations. So felt both Carlyle and Ruskin, and in their own lives and in their teaching, God and religion occupied an ever-present and prominent place. Their books, lectures and letters all revealed the importance of God's presence and their awareness and natural assumption of the role He would always occupy in men's lives.

From Carlyle's birth place and through Ruskin's heritage, the stern and devout faith of Scotland was an important influence. Carlyle's spiritual resurrection, as outlined in Sartor Resartus, did not essentially deviate in spirit from the fundamental beliefs of his youth, and, indeed, the "Everlasting Yea" enforced in his mind the strength and influence of God.

Yet before examining the effect of his religious beliefs on his writing, it would be well to note briefly

the limitations that Carlyle's religious creed put upon him. In the first place, his beliefs precluded the hope or the expectations which many other faiths provided as both a goal and an encouragement to their followers. Carlyle lived within the rigorous bounds of a creed which essentially promised no reward, which offered no solace, which was a road of struggle. He lacked, consequently, tolerance and sympathy for men with less strength of purpose than he possessed. At the same time, while he pleaded for a regeneration in Britain, he required, through this stern faith, sacrifices rather than acquisitions.

Carlyle did, in fact, possess an emphatically positive philosophy, but in contrast to writers who were approximate contemporaries, his religious beliefs again were often a handicap, both in his understanding of others, and in his presentation of a way of life which others would wish to accept. If Ruskin, Arnold, Mill and Morris were unable to write of such a fundamental and rock-like faith, shown either as the core of their own life or as an approach to the future, they offered in its place more immediately likable alternatives. Their stress on the right to happiness, and the search for perfection, as well as an appreciation of art and beauty, were vivid contrasts to the austere faith of Carlyle.

Through the teaching of his mother, Ruskin was



raised with strict and literal faith resting on Scripture. While the expressions of his beliefs were altered with the years, he retained an unshaken and unquestioned belief in God. Ruskin, however, came to realize God as a benevolent Deity with a kindness and love inharmonious with Carlyle's conception. By no means a matter of discord between them, Ruskin's beliefs nonetheless led him on an opposite path from Carlyle in his interpretation of God's work in the world.

In their writings, this importance of religion and God is far more predominant in Carlyle's works in that he made faith a cornerstone in his pleas for awakening and reform. He cried for a recognition of God in men's lives which Ruskin, while acknowledging as necessary, more usually assumed as an unstated premise.

When analysing the wretchedness of the nation and of the individual, Carlyle found the acceptance of God an immediate need. In an observation of man's plight in contemporary Britain, he recognized the actual lack of faith which existed and said, in Past and Present:

"To speak in the ancient dialect, we have forgotten God; - in the most modern dialect and very truth of the matter, we have taken up the Fact of this Universe as it is not. We have quietly closed our eyes to the eternal Substance of things, and opened them only to the Shows and Shams of things. We quietly believe this Universe to be intrinsically a great unintelligible PERHAPS; extrinsically, clear enough, it is a great, most extensive Cattlefold and Workhouse, with most extensive Kitchen-ranges, Dining-tables, - whereat he is wise who can find a place. All the Truth of this Universe is uncertain; only the profit and loss of it,

the pudding and praise of it, are and remain very visible to the practical man.

There is no longer any God for us! God's Laws are become a Greatest-Happiness Principle, a Parliamentary Expediency: The Heavens overarch us only as an Astronomical Time-keeper; a butt for Herschel-telescopes to shoot science at, to shoot sentimentalities at: - in our and old Jonson's dialect, man has lost the soul out of him; and now, after the due period, - begins to find the want of it!"<sup>2</sup>

Carlyle's method of illuminating the ills of the present was quite often an examination and comparison with the past history, or even more, the continuum of history was made the vehicle on which to base his condemnations and reforms.

Past and Present was but one approach. The histories, the essays, and the articles were filled with the asides and comments of the author noting often the seemingly eternal follies of man, but likewise, just as often praising virtues of the past at the expense of the present, finding new follies and their woes.

Religion, too, was a part of this history, and in Carlyle's beliefs was all-important throughout each great nation and age:

"I believe you will find in all histories of nations, that this (a religious nature) has been at the origin and foundation of them all; and that no nation which did not contemplate this wonderful universe with an awestricken and reverential belief that there was a great unknown, omnipotent, and all-wise and all-just Being, superintend-

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<sup>2</sup>Carlyle, Past and Present, pp. 117-8.

ing all men in it, and all interests in it, - no nation ever came to very much, nor did any man either, who forgot that. If a man did forget that, he forgot the most important part of his mission in this world."<sup>3</sup>

Further, he took this belief beyond the sense of Christianity alone and meant it to include Thor or Mahomet, Socrates or Thales. Christianity was the final culmination of men's religious experience, but other beliefs and other groups, in their realization of this need, had the validity for their greatness.

Thus did the civilizations of the world develop and flourish. Yet behind this national greatness must dwell at the same time, an individual strength. Carlyle was most eloquent in expressing the power of faith and the tragedy of life without it. This lack of faith, he felt, was at the base of the problems of his age. Man was and would continue to be unable to cope with his existence without faith. He wrote of men that:

"...there has, in most civilised ages, been an inward force vouchsafed him, whereby the pressure of things outward might be withstood. Obstruction abounded; but Faith also was not wanting. It is by Faith that man removes mountains: while he had Faith, his limbs might be wearied with toiling, his back galled with bearing; but the heart within him was peaceable and resolved. In the thickest gloom there burnt a lamp to guide him. If he struggled and suffered, he felt that it

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<sup>3</sup>Carlyle, Critical and Miscellaneous Essays, VII, "Inaugral Address at Edinburgh, 2d April 1866", p. 176.

even should be so; knew for what he was suffering and struggling. Faith gave him an inward Willingness; a world of Strength wherewith to front a world of Difficulty. The true wretchedness lies here: that the Difficulty remain and the Strength be lost; that Pain cannot relieve itself in free Effort; that we have the Labour, and want the Willingness. Faith strengthens us, enlightens us, for all endeavors and endurances; with Faith we can do all, and dare all, and life itself has a thousand times been joyfully given away. But the sum of man's misery is even this, that he feel himself crushed under the Juggernaut wheels, and know that Juggernaut is no divinity, but a dead mechanical idol."<sup>4</sup>

Religion became, therefore, according to Carlyle, the pivotal condition for the regeneration of Britain, and for that matter the world, from the dolours in which it existed. The core of Carlyle's ideas for change was composed of this awareness of religious beliefs and power. This alone would overcome the mechanism he deplored and the misery which overwhelmed faith. Such thoughts, too, were not but vain hopes, for he perceived a religious realization once more, and said that:

"Remarkable it is, truly, how everywhere the eternal fact begins again to be recognised, that there is a Godlike in human affairs; that God not only made us and beholds us, but is in us and around us; that the Age of Miracles, as it ever was, now is. Such recognition we discern on all hands and in all countries: in each country after its own fashion...Meanwhile let us rejoice rather that so much has been seen into, were it through never so diffracting media, and never so madly distorted;

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid., IV, "Characteristics", pp. 25-6.

that in all dialects, though but half-articulately, this high Gospel begins to be preached: Man is still Man. The genius of Mechanism, as was once before predicted, will not always sit like a choking incubus on our soul; but at length, when by a new magic Word the old spell is broken, become our slave, and as familiar-spirit do all our bidding. 'We are near awakening when we dream that we dream.'"<sup>5</sup>

In broad outline, Carlyle envisioned a positive realm of action for the reform which he believed so necessary; action which emanated from the deepest of man's beliefs.

Carlyle set forth, also, the concept of a personal religion; not the creed but the spirit of its acceptance. In a particular example of this living of a religious life, he drew upon the Catholicism of seven centuries past and wished for a rebirth of the unstudied expression of beliefs which underlay the existence of these monks.

"Jocelin, Eadmer, and such religious men, have as yet nothing of 'Methodism'; no Doubt or even root of Doubt. Religion is not a diseased self-introspection, an agonising inquiry: their duties are clear to them, the way of supreme good plain, indisputable, and they are travelling on it. Religion lies over them like an all-embracing heavenly canopy, like an atmosphere and life-element, which is not spoken of, which in all things is presupposed without speech."<sup>6</sup>

And truly, as we said above, is not this comparative silence of Abbot Samson as to his religion precisely the healthiest sign

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., IV, "Characteristics", p. 37.

<sup>6</sup>Carlyle, Past and Present, p. 52.



of him and of it? 'The Unconscious is the alone Complete.' Abbot Samson all along a busy working man, as all men are bound to be, his religion, his worship was like his daily bread to him; - which he did not take the trouble to talk much about; which he merely ate at stated intervals, and lived and did his work upon...

Methodism with its eye forever turned on its own navel; asking itself with torturing anxiety of Hope and Fear, "Am I right? am I wrong? Shall I be saved? shall I not be damned?" - what is this, at bottom, but a new phasis of Egoism, stretched out into the Infinite; not always the heaven-lie for its infinitude. Brother, so soon as possible, endeavor to rise above all that."<sup>7</sup>

Carlyle stressed emphatically that the individual must hold beliefs which are unquestioned in his own mind. Only through complete assurance did one have the strength of faith required for the tasks of life. He wrote in Latter-Day Pamphlets that:

"A man's 'religion' consists not of the many things he is in doubt of and tries to believe, but of the few he is assured of, and has no need of effort for believing. His religion, whatever it may be, is a discerned fact, and coherent system of discerned facts to him; he stands fronting the worlds and the eternities upon it: to doubt of it is not permissible at all. He must verify or expel his doubts, convert them into certainty of Yes or No; or they will be the death of his religion. - But, on the other hand, convert them into certainty of Yes and No; or even of Yes though No, as the Ignatian method is, what will become of your religion?"...<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 101

<sup>8</sup>Carlyle, Latter-Day Pamphlets, p. 266.

Throughout all that he wrote, Carlyle entered these beliefs concerning religion. To the contrary of the despondency and the generalized proposals so often ascribed to Carlyle, his documents of faith offered both positive hope and ideas. From religious convictions and actions the reforms for which, Carlyle felt, Britain cried were to be enacted. Within this faith, all might realize that, "This world, after all our science and sciences, is still a miracle; wonderful, inscrutable, magical and more, to whosoever will think of it."<sup>9</sup>

In Ruskin's works, however, religion does not consciously permeate all facets of his teaching. He, instead, adopted other active steps in the plans for reform that he formulated. Where for Carlyle, man's progress was only to be measured in relationship with his struggle to fulfill God's laws; for Ruskin, man's advance was marked by his acts under the values of, among others, aesthetics, politics and economics that he held. Religious beliefs might shape man's philosophy, but his positive social acts were of greatest importance, and, for these, he would be rewarded by God.

In actual practice of faith, Ruskin shared, at least in his youth, much of the Scottish Puritanism of Carlyle, as was noted. Yet the stern nature of these beliefs was

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<sup>9</sup>Carlyle, On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History, p. 8. (Further listed as On Heroes).

too confining for Ruskin's aesthetic growth, while the religious background of much of the art that he studied encouraged a broader outlook. A reminiscence written late in life reveals this widening of scope:

"But neither the Puritanism of Belgravia, nor Liberalism of Red Lion Square, interested, or offended, me, otherwise than as the grotesque conditions of variously typhoid or smoke-dried London life. To my old Scotch shepherd Puritanism, and the correspondent forms of noble French Protestantism, I never for an instant failed in dutiful affection and honour. From John Bunyan and Isaac Ambrose, I had received the religion by which I still myself lived, as far as I had spiritual life at all; and I had again and again proof enough of its truth, within limits, to have served me for all my own need, either in this world or the next. But my ordained business, and mental gifts, were outside of those limits. I saw, as clearly as I saw the sky and its stars, that music in Scotland was not to be studied under a Free Church precentor, nor indeed under any disciples of John Knox, but of Signior David; that, similarly, painting in England was not to be admired in the illuminations of Watt's hymns; nor architecture in the design of Mr. Iron's chapel in the Grove."<sup>10</sup>

Ruskin had a more dramatic conversion from his childhood faith on a Sunday in Turin. He attended a Waldensian service with, at the most, two dozen others, during which these few were informed by their preacher that they alone, with their presence, enjoyed the favour of God in Turin. Afterwards, Ruskin continues:

"Myself neither cheered nor greatly alarmed

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<sup>10</sup>Works, XXXV, Praeterita, p. 490.

by this doctrine, I walked back into the condemned city, and up into the gallery where Paul Veronese's Solomon and the Queen of Sheba glowed in full afternoon light. The gallery windows being open, there came in with the warm air, floating swells and falls of military music, from the courtyard before the palace, which seemed to me more devotional, in their perfect art, tune, and discipline, than anything I remembered of evangelical hymns. And as the perfect colour and sound gradually asserted their power on me, they seemed finally to fasten me in the old article of Jewish faith, that things done delightfully and rightly were always done by the help and in the Spirit of God.

Of course that hour's meditation in the gallery of Turin only concluded the courses of thought which had been leading me to such end through many years. There was no sudden conversion possible to me, either by preacher, picture, or dulcimer. But, that day, my evangelical beliefs were put away, to be debated of no more."<sup>11</sup>

Ruskin's Evangelism and Puritanism were replaced by a faith which essentially fitted with his ideas on economics and art and the rights of humanity; his belief in God remained undisturbed by his departure from early convictions; his concept of God's manifestation and laws altered. Ruskin's interpretation of these laws coincided with his plans for Britain's reformation from the perils of industrialism and other ills. He was without denominational or actually philosophical alliance, for as he stated in an 1877 letter of Fors Clavigera:

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid., pp. 495-6.

Meantime, don't be afraid that I am going to become a Roman Catholic, or that I am one, in disguise. I can no more become a Roman-Catholic, than again an Evangelical-Protestant. I am a "Catholic" of those Catholics, to whom the Catholic Epistle of St. James is addressed - "the Twelve Tribes which are scattered abroad" - the literally or spiritually wandering Israel of all the Earth. The St. George's creed includes Turks, Jews, infidels, and heretics; and I am myself much of a Turk, more of a Jew; alas, most of all, - an infidel; but not an atom of a heretic: Catholic, I, of the Catholics; holding only for sure God's order to His scattered Israel, - "He hath shown thee, oh man, what is good; and what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to do justice, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"<sup>12</sup>

The principles of religious belief and particularly the idea of God which Ruskin embraced and advocated were in major aspects entirely in contradiction with those of Carlyle. Specifically, Carlyle believed in the omnipotent, awful, just, and stern God of his forefathers; a God requiring the obedience of man. Ruskin, on the other hand, held God to be a loving, kind, and merciful Father whose joy was in the joy of man. God's wish was, according to Ruskin, oriented to man's needs and desserts. Where obedience was required by God, fulfilment was followed by reward. In a paper read before the Royal Institute of British Architects, Ruskin wrote:

"And religion is the belief in a Spirit whose mercies are over all His works -

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<sup>12</sup>Works, XXIX, Fors Clavigera, p. 92.



who is kind even to the unthankful and the evil; who is everywhere present, and therefore is in no place to be sought, and in no place to be evaded; to whom all creatures, times, and things are everlastingly holy, and who claims - not tithes of wealth, nor sevenths of days - but all the wealth that we have, and all the days that we live, and all the beings that we are, but who claims that totality because He delights only in the delight of His creatures; and because, therefore, the one duty that they owe to Him, and the only service they can render Him, is to be happy."<sup>13</sup>

Contrast this with the God of Carlyle's beliefs, in which Carlyle understood the burden of existence to be placed on man. Man's triumph and pleasure is in overcoming the toils of life. Man's relationship with God is strengthened in this struggle and throughout all, man is sustained by faith. Carlyle was furthest separated from Ruskin, though, in their views on the pleasure and happiness derived of and from God. Carlyle, or Teufelsdrackh, traversing "The Everlasting No", questioned thus:

Has the word Duty no meaning; is what we call Duty no divine Messenger and Guide, but a false earthy Fantasm, made-up of Desire and Fear, of emanations from the Gallows and from Doctor Graham's Celestial-Bed? Happiness of an approving Conscience! Did not Paul of Tarsus, whom admiring men have since named Saint, feel that he was "the chief of sinners"; and Nero of Rome, jocund in spirit (*wohlgemuth*), spend much of his time in fiddling? Foolish Wordmonger and Motive-grinder, who in thy Logic-mill hast an earthly mechanism for the Godlike itself, and wouldst fain grind me out Virtue from

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<sup>13</sup>Works, XIX, The Study of Architecture in Schools, p. 30.

the husks of Pleasure, - I tell thee, Nay!  
 To the unregenerate Prometheus Vincit of  
 a man, it is ever the bitterest aggravation  
 of his wretchedness that he is conscious  
 of Virtue, that he feels himself the victim  
 not of suffering only, but of injustice.  
 What then? Is the heroic inspiration we  
 name Virtue but some Passion; some bubble  
 of the blood, bubbling in the direction  
 others profit by? I know not: only this I  
 know, If what thou namest Happiness, be our  
 true aim, then are we all astray."<sup>14</sup>

Also in direct contrast with Carlyle was Ruskin's  
 belief in the rewards which accrued from God to the good  
 and faithful. Ruskin felt that these were readily demon-  
 strable, and illustrations were given in Fors Clavigera:

"Wherever the Christian Church, or any  
 section of it, has indeed resolved to live  
 a Christian life, and keep God's laws in  
 God's name, - there, instantly, manifest  
 approval of Heaven is given by accession  
 of worldly prosperity and victory. This  
 witness has only been unheard, because  
 every sect of Christians refuses to believe  
 that the religion of any other sect can be  
 sincere, or accepted of Heaven: while the  
 truth is that it does not matter a burnt stick's  
 end from the altar, in Heaven's sight, whether  
 you are Catholic or Protestant, Eastern,  
 Western, Byzantine, or Norman, but only  
 whether you are true. So that the moment  
 Venice is true to St. Mark, her flag flies  
 over all the Eastern islands; and the moment  
 Florence is true to the Lady of Lilies, her  
 flag flies over all the Apennines; and the  
 moment Switzerland is true to Notre Dame des  
 Neiges, her pine-club beats down the Austrian  
 lances; and the moment England is true to  
 her Protestant virtue, all the sea-winds  
 ally themselves with her against the Armada:  
 and though after-shame and infidel failure  
 follow upon every nation, yet the glory of

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<sup>14</sup>Carlyle, Sartor Resartus, p. 112.

their great religious day remains unsullied, and in that, they live for ever."<sup>15</sup>

The examples that Ruskin chose are interesting, for they support his early theory on the history of the rise of Venice in which he maintained that her glory in art and architecture came through the beliefs of her people. In much the same way, he equated the great art of Florence with her religious spirit. Ruskin, in his analysis of history during this period, deduced the religious spirit from the art.

Considering these several aspects of the religious beliefs of both men, it becomes apparent that Ruskin diverged widely from the basic unity that in his youth he held with Carlyle. As Ruskin's plans for economic and social reform advanced, and as his interpretations of art became connected and aligned with these same plans, his religious beliefs were generally submerged under or expressed through his dreams of an altered and better world. His concept was for happiness and prosperity, work and reward. His religion, from its Puritan beginnings, also followed this course.

The preceding discussion on religion revealed that Carlyle and Ruskin held opposing beliefs as to the nature of God's beneficence and the rewards which were to be en-

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<sup>15</sup>Works, XXIX, Fora Clavigera, pp. 337-8.

joyed through Him. The idea of happiness was closely tied in with this variance which existed in their philosophies. It warrants a more thorough investigation as an entity that runs through many of their declarations which are not in harmony. In addition to its relationship with religion, happiness was also interwoven with both men's stands on the functions and importance of work.

Nowhere in their writings can a subject be found on which the two were at greater odds. Carlyle was emphatically against happiness in any but the most restricted sense, while Ruskin held happiness as a basic right and necessity for all men. In a statement from the Stones of Venice, referring particularly to art but applicable in a far wider sense, Ruskin typified his convictions when he wrote:

"You were made for enjoyment, and the world was filled with things which you will enjoy, unless you are too proud to be pleased by them, or too grasping to care for what you cannot turn to other account than mere delight."<sup>16</sup>

He qualified these sentiments, often quite extensively, but basically he grew to feel that this extreme of pleasure was the ultimate, and not undesirable, reward in man's life and ambitions. The goal of happiness was expounded likewise for the audience to whom he addressed Sesame and Lilies. The solemnity which Ruskin here urged was the means of

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<sup>16</sup>Works, IX, The Stones of Venice, p. 72.

achieving happiness.

"Remember then, that I, at least, have warned you, that the happiness of your life, and its power, and its part and rank in earth or in heaven, depend on the way you pass your days now. They are not to be sad days: far from that, the first duty of young people is to be delighted and delightful; but they are to be in the deepest sense solemn days."<sup>17</sup>

The voice of Carlyle, however, was diametrically in opposition to such a philosophy. The influence of his mother and Ecclefechan, and the years of spiritual doubt with its resolution, combined to deny completely man's right to Ruskin's definition and objective of happiness. In Past and Present Carlyle had written:

"Our highest religion is named the 'Worship of Sorrow.' For the son of man there is no noble crown, well worn or even ill worn, but is a crown of thorns! --These things, in spoken words, or still better, in felt instincts alive in every heart, were once well known.

Does not the whole wretchedness, the whole Atheism as I call it, of man's ways, in these generations, shadow itself for us in that unspeakable Life-philosophy of his: The pretension to be what he calls 'happy'? Every pitifulest whipster that walks within a skin has his head filled with the notion that he is, shall be, or by all human and divine laws ought to be 'happy'. His wishes, the pitifulest whipster's, are to be fulfilled for him; his days, the pitifulest whipster's are to flow on in ever-gentle current of enjoyment, impossible even for the gods. The prophets preach to us, Thou shalt be happy; thou shalt love pleasant things, and find them. The people clamour, Why have we not found pleasant things?....

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<sup>17</sup>Works, XVIII, Sesame and Lilies, p. 37.



The only happiness a brave man ever troubled himself with asking much about was, happiness enough to get his work done. Not "I can't eat." but "I can't work." that was the burden of all wise complaining among men. It is, after all, the one unhappiness of a man, That he cannot work; that he cannot get his destiny as a man fulfilled. Behold, the day is passing swiftly over, our life is passing swiftly over; and the night cometh, wherein no man can work. The night once come, our happiness, our unhappiness, - it is all abolished; vanished, clean gone; a thing that has been:..."<sup>18</sup>

How great the gulf between their convictions was can be seen again and again, for both wrote extensively on the subject. Increasingly for Ruskin, it became necessary that life should be kind and that the objective of life should be happiness. Unquestionably, the multiplying sorrows which accompanied Ruskin throughout his own adult years accounted for much of this emphasis. As time passed, Ruskin dwelt more feelingly on the contentments of former years which now escaped him. In Ethics of the Dust, he told his young listeners that:

"...the will of God respecting us is that we shall live by each other's happiness, and life; not by each other's misery, and death...Men help each other by their joy, not by their sorrow...And finally, for your own teaching, observe, although there may be need for much self-sacrifice and self-denial in the correction of faults of character, the moment the character is formed, the self-denial ceases. Nothing is really well done, which it costs you pain to do."<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup>Carlyle, Past and Present, pp. 132-4.

<sup>19</sup>Works, XVIII, The Ethics of the Dust, pp. 286-7.

Thus, Ruskin, at this period, denied that in themselves the effort and the result of the struggle were worthwhile. He was instead advocating a society in which gentle virtues should conquer and rule.

He was extremely unrealistic, too, when, in writing for his schoolgirl audience, he expounded on the delights of work; delights far-removed from those which Carlyle had preached:

"God is a kind Father...He chooses work for every creature which will be delightful to them, if they do it simply and humbly...and we may always be sure, whatever we are doing, that we cannot be pleasing Him, if we are not happy ourselves."<sup>20</sup>

Ruskin forgot here the plight of the poor of Britain, the misery of the factory labourer, the lack of choice in selecting a job. The ideals of Ruskin were beautifully presented to the girls of Winnington and it is easily possible to see these thoughts, unclouded by the arguments on economics and politics which he had to advance in convincing adults, as his most revealing expressions of his actual beliefs.

Elements which agree with these noble statements appeared in other works. In Munera Pulveris, for example, he wrote:

"It has been just stated that the object of political economy is the continuance not only of life, but of healthy and happy life.

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<sup>20</sup>Ibid., pp. 290-1.

But all true happiness is both a consequence and cause of life: it is a sign of its vigor, and source of its continuance. All true suffering is in like manner a consequence and cause of death. I shall therefore, in future, use the word "Life" singly: but let it be understood to include in its signification the happiness and power of the entire human nature, body and soul."<sup>21</sup>

Elsewhere in his works, Ruskin qualified to a degree the hopes of happiness which these quotations have illustrated. He did not discount the idea in itself, but rather placed it within somewhat more limited confines. He approached closest to agreement with Carlyle only insofar as he maintained that happiness should be expected through work and art alone. Even so, such a position was but a fractional accord based upon the recognition of the importance of work.

"...whenever the arts and labours of life are fulfilled in this spirit of striving against misrule, and doing whatever we have to do, honourably and perfectly, they invariably bring happiness, as much as seems possible to the nature of man. In all other paths by which that happiness is pursued there is disappointment, or destruction: for ambition and for passion there is no rest - no fruition; and fairest pleasures of youth perish in a darkness greater than their past light: and the loftiest and purest love too often does but inflame the cloud of life with endless fire of pain."<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>Works, XVII, Munera Pulveris, p. 149.

<sup>22</sup>Works, XVIII, Sesame and Lilies, pp. 174-5.

Actually, the pursuit of happiness, even as gained through labour, was an action contradictory to Carlyle's most liberal and most cherished views.

These views held by Carlyle were a contrast to much of the prevailing literary sentiment of this era. Arnold, for example, considered happiness to be desirable and necessary for all men. Carlyle especially differed, however, with John Stuart Mill and the utilitarians.

The point at which Carlyle and Mill particularly diverged in belief was when Mill denied that utilitarianism was a godless concept. For in such a denial, or in an acceptance of God, Mill thereby made God desire the happiness of man. With their entire philosophy resting on this greatest happiness principle, the utilitarians, in acknowledging God, arrived at a faith diametrically opposed to Carlyle's understanding of God.

With this question of happiness, there opens then as a result, as was said, a chasm of the greatest magnitude between Carlyle and Ruskin. For despite the harmony which may exist to a determinable degree in regard to their concepts of democracy or economics or government, they cannot be considered philosophically harmonious through the instance of their discord on happiness. Their beliefs of happiness, in addition to their religious ones, were the foundations upon which the other facets of life were developed. This divergence, consequently was a basic

split which should not be overshadowed by the oneness of spirit that was a result of conditions in Britain which were forcing them to speak. The beliefs concerning happiness, along with those of religion and work, reached from the center of each man's being to influence the most peripheral ideas emanating from the heart.

Ruskin, in Pre-Raphaelitism, gave a precise description of this right to happiness which he held to be so necessary. He here incorporated it again closely with work, as a fundamental in man's lives:

"...God intends no man to live in this world without working: but it seems to me no less evident that He intends every man to be happy in his work...as on the one hand, infinite misery is caused by idle people, who both fail in doing what was appointed for them to do...so on the other hand, no small misery is caused by over-worked and unhappy people, in the dark views which they necessarily take up themselves, and force upon others, of work itself. Were it not so, I believe the fact of their being unhappy is in itself a violation of divine law, and a sign of some kind of folly or sin in their way of life. Now in order that people may be happy in their work, these three things are needed: They must be fit for it: They must not do too much of it: and they must have a sense of success in it...So that in order that a man may be happy, it is necessary that he should not only be capable of his work, but a good judge of his work."<sup>23</sup>

The great argument by Carlyle against happiness is found in Sartor Resartus in the culmination of his re-

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<sup>23</sup>Works, XII, Pre-Raphaelitism, p. 341.



ligious doubts and their resolution. In this exposition Carlyle plunged to the essence of man's life; he placed happiness as an unworthy contrast to loving God. From the renunciation of happiness came, according to Carlyle, a higher than happiness which resolved its absence. This position by Carlyle was an unwavering one, and it renegued entirely the belief of Ruskin:

" But the whim we have of Happiness is somewhat thus. By certain valuations, and averages, of our own striking, we come upon some sort of average terrestrial lot; this we fancy belongs to us by nature, and of indefeasible right. It is simple payment of our wages, of our deserts; requires neither thanks nor complaint; only such overplus as there may be do we account Happiness; any deficit again is Misery. Now consider that we have the valuation of our own deserts ourselves, and what a fund of Self-conceit there is in each of us, - do you wonder that the balance should so often dip the wrong way, and many a Blockhead dry: See there, what a payment; was every worthy gentleman so used! - I tell thee, Blockhead, it all comes of the Vanity; of what thou fanciest those some deserts of thine to be. Fancy that thou deservest to be hanged (as is most likely), thou wilt feel it happiness to be only shot: fancy that thou deservest to be hanged in a hairhalter, it will be luxury to die in hemp.

'So true is it, what I then said, that the Fraction of Life can be increased in value not so much by increasing your Numerator as by lessening your Denominator. Nay, unless my Algebra deceive me, Unity itself divided by Zero will give Infinity. Make thy claim of wages a zero, then; thou hast the world under thy feet. Well did the Wisest of our time write: "It is only with Renunciation (Entsagen) that Life, properly speaking, can be said to begin."

'I asked myself: What is this that, ever since earliest years, thou hast been fretting and fuming, and lamenting and self-tormenting,

on account of? Say it in a word: is it not because thou art not HAPPY? Because the THOU (sweet gentleman) is not sufficiently honoured, nourished, soft-bedded, and lovingly cared-for? Foolish soul! What Act of Legislature was there that thou shouldst be Happy? A little while ago thou hadst no right to be at all. What if thou wert born and pre-destined not to be Happy, but to be Unhappy! Art thou nothing other than a Vulture, then, that fliest through the Universe seeking after somewhat to eat; and shrieking dolefully because carrion enough is not given thee? Close thy Byron; open the Goethe.'

'Es leuchtet mir ein, I see a glimpse of it!' cries he elsewhere: 'there is in man a HIGHER than Love of Happiness: he can do without Happiness, and instead thereof find Blessedness! Was it not to preach-forth this same HIGHER that sages and martyrs, the Poet and the Priest, in all times, have spoken and suffered; bearing testimony, through life and through death, of the Godlike that is in Man, and how in the Godlike only has he Strength and Freedom? Which God-inspired Doctrine art thou also honoured to be taught; O heavens. and broken with manifold merciful Afflictions, even till thou become contrite, and learn it. O, thank thy Destiny for these; thankfully bear what yet remain; thou hadst need of them; the Self in thee needed to be annihilated. By benignant fever-paroxysms is Life rooting out the deep-seated chronic Disease, and triumphs over Death. On the roaring billows of Time, thou art not engulfed, but borne aloft into the azure of Eternity. Love not Pleasure; love God. This is the EVERLASTING YEA, wherein all contradiction is solved: wherein whoso walks and works, it is well with him.'<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Carlyle, Sartor Resartus, pp. 131-3. Carlyle was not, despite his denunciation of happiness, an advocate of a sombre life unrelieved by humour or pleasantness. In his inaugural address as Rector of the

At the conclusion of his essay Death of Goethe, Carlyle wrote movingly in his eulogy:

"What, then, is man! What, then, is man! He endures but for an hour, and is crushed before the moth. Yet in the being and in the working of a faithful man is there already (as all faith, from the beginning, gives assurance) a something that pertains not to this wild death-element of Time; that triumphs over Time, and is, and will be, when Time shall be no more."<sup>25</sup>

Not only does this statement reveal Carlyle's implicit faith in the worth of man, a faith sometimes questionable amid his condemnations, but it also illustrates the position in which work was placed in his philosophy. In the expression of his religious beliefs and in his disgust with the search for happiness, Carlyle, as has been seen, brought forth the doctrine of work to fulfil, as far as possible, God's word. Work became the practical manifestation of his most deeply spiritual beliefs.

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University of Edinburgh, he said that,

"Piety does not mean that a man should make a sour face about things, and refuse to enjoy wisely what his Maker has given. Neither do you find it to have been so with the best sort, - with old Knox, in particular. No; if you look into Knox, you will find a beautiful Scotch humour in him, as well as the grimmest and sternest truth when necessary, and a great deal of laughter." (Critical Essays, 7, p. 196.)

<sup>25</sup>Carlyle, Critical and Miscellaneous Essays, IV, "Death of Goethe", p. 50.

Ruskin, too, preached on the importance of work in the life of every man. He was, in this area, in relatively close agreement with Carlyle despite the contrasting views they held on both the virtue of happiness and the nature of religious faith. Ruskin, however, was an advocate of work through persuasions differing to an extent from those of Carlyle. This section, therefore, will compare the beliefs of Ruskin and Carlyle on work in an attempt to determine more exactly the nature and the closeness of their ideas.

Carlyle's discontent with, and hopes for, the state of life in Britain found their most positive expression in his doctrine of work. With this, Carlyle was able to bring his analysis of man's follies away from a purely philosophical level, and down to the arena of practical action. In work, he conceived of a sphere in which the realm of the mind could be translated to demonstrable terms. He, thus, despite criticism to the contrary, provided concrete proposals to augment his negative censure.

Men obviously have done work of some type, even hard work, during their lives. What then did Carlyle consider the flaws in the present system? Foremost, he felt that almost all labour was misdirected and done for reasons which were, at the least, unadmirable. In a critical essay, he spoke out against the false values for which work was accomplished:

"Men are grown mechanical in head and in heart, as well as in hand. They have lost faith in individual endeavour, and in natural force, of any kind. Not for internal perfection, but for external combinations and arrangements, for institutions, constitutions, - for Mechanism of one sort or other, do they hope and struggle. Their whole efforts, attachments, opinions, turn on mechanism, and are of a mechanical character."<sup>26</sup>

At the same time, this objection to the goals of work did not in any way imply that one should expend less effort. Labour in all facets of living was the supreme satisfaction to be gained from one's existence. Indolence, even in the pleasures of reading, was not to be tolerated according to Carlyle, for he wrote that:

"A reposing state, in which the Hill were brought under us, not we obliged to mount it, might indeed for the present be more convenient; but, in the end, it could not be equally satisfying. Continuance of passive pleasure, it should never be forgotten, is here, as under all conditions of mortal existence, an impossibility. Everywhere in life, the true question is, not what we gain, but what we do: so also in intellectual matters, in conversation, in reading, which is more precise and careful conversation, it is not what we receive, but what we are made to give, that chiefly contents and profits us. True, the mass of readers will object; because, like the mass of men, they are too indolent."<sup>27</sup>

These two quotations show, in a minor way, the area which Carlyle's criticism covered. Work, in the broad

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<sup>26</sup>Ibid., II, "Signs of the Times", pp. 235-6.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., I, "Goethe's Helena", pp. 129-30.



sense in which Carlyle defined it, was to be the motivation and the main commitment of life.

Carlyle's theory of work followed directly, as was noted, from his religious beliefs as their expression in action. We may not be actively aware, Carlyle thought, of the totality of our ideas concerning religion and what these ideas, as a whole, are supposed to mean. Our realization of their importance and our own innate being can only be achieved through a search on our part which is carried out through work. Carlyle expressed this more clearly when, from out of the travails of the Everlasting No in Sartor Resartus, he said:

"A certain inarticulate Self-consciousness dwells dimly in us; which only our Works can render articulate and decisively discernible. Our Works are the mirror wherein the spirit first sees its natural lineaments. Hence, too, the folly of that impossible Precept, Know thyself; till it be translated into this partially possible one, Know what thou canst work at."<sup>28</sup>

Carlyle found, however, that through recent years, the necessity, importance, and spirit of work had been lost. This loss was felt particularly by those who had the most potentiality of learning from it. The educated, the nobility, the leaders of Britain, both political and industrial, these men failed now to comprehend the value of labour, for indeed, they had not to do it. Carlyle's

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<sup>28</sup>Carlyle, Sartor Resartus, pp. 113-4.

repeated message was that to work was to know, to know oneself and, as well, the meaning of life:

"And now, when kenning and can-ning have become two altogether different words; and this, the first principle of human culture, the foundation-stone of all but false imaginary culture, that men must, before every other thing, be trained to do somewhat, has been for some generations, laid quietly on the shelf, with such result as we see, - consider what advantage those same uneducated Working classes have over the educated Unworking classes, in one particular; herein, namely, that they must work. To work. What incalculable sources of cultivation lie in that process, in that attempt; how it lays hold of the whole man, not of a small theoretical calculating fraction of him, but of the whole practical, doing and daring and enduring man; thereby to awaken dormant faculties, root-out old errors, at every step! He that has done nothing has known nothing. Vain is it to sit scheming and plausibly discoursing: up and be doing! If thy knowledge be real, put it forth from thee: grapple with real Nature; try thy theories there, and see how they hold out. Do one thing, for the first time in thy life do a thing; a new light will rise to thee on the doing of all things whatsoever. Truly, a boundless significance lies in work; whereby the humblest craftsman comes to attain much, which is of indispensable use, but which he who is of no craft, were he never so high, runs the risk of missing."<sup>29</sup>

As with rewards from God, rewards from work were not to be considered. The importance of the labour was in the action and the strength devoted to it. The degree with which this is given indicated the worth of the man. At the same time a growing realization of what one is

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<sup>29</sup>Carlyle, Critical and Miscellaneous Essays, IV, "Corn-Law Rhymes", p. 190.

accomplishing, a knowing oneself, should accompany labour, although there was dignity in the struggle to complete any task. Nevertheless, the nobleman and the educated man were faced with a larger burden of responsibility than was the peasant worker; so should their efforts and comprehension be the more complete. Yet the signs of the educated man, the products of his intelligence alone, were not superior to the labours requiring effort which he should also complete. In Past and Present, Carlyle emphasized that:

"The spoken Word, the written Poem, is said to be an epitome of the man; how much more the done work. Whatsoever of morality and of intelligence; what of patience, perseverance, faithfulness, of method, insight, ingenuity, energy; in a word, whatsoever of Strength the man had in him will lie written in the Work he does. To work: why, it is to try himself against Nature, and her everlasting unerring Laws; these will tell a true verdict as to the man. ...Working as great Nature bade him: does not that mean virtue of a kind; nay of all operatives can be got to spin it, and at length one has the woven webs and sells them, by following Nature's regulations in that matter: by not following Nature's regulations, you have them not."<sup>30</sup>

With this stress on the vitalness of work, Carlyle also placed stringent qualifications on the labours which were of value. Much work was presently being accomplished, but far too large a proportion of it was unaccompanied by the virtues which knowing oneself in-

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<sup>30</sup>Carlyle, Past and Present, p. 136.

cluded. He proposed the spinning of cotton as fruitful work, yet he also insisted that such spinning and the results of it must take place with the proper motives in mind. Carlyle wrote that in this regard:

"...we will say rather, the world has been rushing on with such fiery animation to get work and ever more work done, it has had no time to think of dividing the wages; and has merely left them to be scrambled for by the Law of the Stronger, law of Supply-and-demand, law of Laissez-faire, and other idle Laws and Un-laws, - saying, in its dire haste to get the work done, That is well enough!"<sup>31</sup>

Ruskin viewed work very much as did Carlyle. Indeed, in its major aspects, it was the field of perhaps their greatest compatability. While a rapport existed, however, the foundation for their beliefs was of a different nature in its detail. For Carlyle, work was the one, the single obedience to an expression of God's word. Work was worship; it was the fulfilment of life. For Ruskin, too, work was a necessity and a basis of religion. Yet, Ruskin accepted it more as one of the elements of life rather than as the supreme action from which others flow. Ruskin maintained that it was as important to find happiness and to appreciate art as it was to work; labour was but one of several requirements in life which may, though, be interdependent.

Regardless of this difference, Ruskin was in sympathy

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<sup>31</sup>Ibid., pp. 18-9.

with Carlyle's conception of what work could accomplish as practical results. Ruskin, in The Two Paths wrote on the necessity of work with words which could be entirely Carlyle's own:

"By far the greater part of the suffering and crime which exist at this moment in civilized Europe, arises simply from people not understanding this truism - not knowing that produce of wealth is eternally connected by the laws of heaven and earth with resolute labour; but hoping in some way to cheat or abrogate this everlasting law of life, and to feed where they have not furrowed, and be warm where they have not woven.

I repeat, nearly all our misery and crime result from this one misapprehension. The law of nature is, that a certain quantity of work is necessary to produce a certain quantity of good, of any kind whatever. If you want knowledge, you must toil for it: if food, you must toil for it: and if pleasure, you must toil for it. But men do not acknowledge this law; or strive to evade it, hoping to get their knowledge, and food, and pleasure for nothing: and in this effort they either fail of getting them, and remain ignorant and miserable, or they obtain them by making other men work for their benefit; and then they are tyrants and robbers."<sup>32</sup>

Not only was Ruskin's understanding of a basic ill in agreement with Carlyle's but his broad conception of how the labour must be performed was concordant likewise. Once more he echoed his "master" and, interestingly enough, it was in the later years (1877) when he had moved further, with the St. George's Guild, from Carlyle's general philosophy, that Ruskin wrote in Fors Clavigera

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<sup>32</sup>Works, XVI, The Two Paths, p. 396.



that:

"...human work must be done honourably and thoroughly, because we are now men; - whether we ever expect to be angels, or ever were slugs, being practically no matter. We are now Human creatures, and must, at our peril, do Human - that is to say, affectionate, honest, and earnest work.

"Farther, I found, and have always since taught, and do teach, and shall teach, I doubt not, till I die, that in resolving to do our work well, is the only sound foundation of any religion whatsoever; and that by that resolution only, and what we have done, and not by our belief, Christ will judge us, as He has plainly told us He will, (though nobody believes Him,) in the Resurrection."<sup>33</sup>

In the details of how labour should be carried out, Ruskin went into more particular specifications than did Carlyle; and, with these details came a variance with the preaching of Carlyle. Ruskin linked labour with aesthetic achievement and saw, for example, that with an aesthetically satisfying result the labour was good. He considered machine-made goods without aesthetic value; the labour involved upon them was thus wasted. Ruskin illustrated this when he wrote that:

"...the evidence of labour becomes painful when it is a sign of Evil greater, as Evil, than the labour is great, as Good. As, for instance, if a man has laboured for an hour at what might have been done by another man in a moment, this evidence of his labour is also evidence of his weakness; and this weakness is greater in rank of evil, than his industry is great in rank of good. Again, if a man have laboured at what was not worth

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<sup>33</sup>Works, XXIX, Fors Clavigera, p. 88.

accomplishing, the signs of his labour are the signs of his folly, and his folly dishonours his industry; we had rather he had been a wise man in rest, than a fool in labour. Again, if a man have laboured without accomplishing anything, the signs of his labour are the signs of his disappointment: and we have more sorrow in sympathy with his failure, than pleasure in sympathy with his work. Now, therefore, in ornament, whenever labour replaces what was better than labour, that is to say, skill and thought; whenever it substitutes itself for these, or negatives these by its existence, then it is positive evil. Copper is an evil when it alloys gold, or poisons food: not an evil, as copper; good in the form of pence, seriously objectionable when it occupies the room of guineas. Let Danae cast it out of her lap, when the gold comes from heaven; but let the poor man gather it up carefully from the earth. Farther, the evidence of labour is not only a good when added to other good, but the utter absence of it destroys good in human work. It is only for God to create without toil; that which man can create without toil is worthless; machine ornaments are no ornaments at all. Consider this carefully, reader: I could illustrate it for you endlessly; but know that you feel it, take up, for a little time, the trade which of all manual trades has been most honoured; be for once a carpenter. Make for yourself a table or a chair, and see if ever you thought any table or chair so delightful, and what strange beauty there will be in their crooked limbs."<sup>34</sup>

Ruskin's statement that it is evil if a man works an hour at a task that would take another a moment was not in accord with Carlyle's belief that the struggle for accomplishment would be worthwhile, despite the time consumed. Once more, with Ruskin, the results, rather

than the action, were of the greatest importance.

His premise of reward was stressed again by Ruskin in Time and Tide, where he upheld the conviction that wages meant pleasure or some other satisfaction as well as profit. He was also at odds with Carlyle here, for he believed that these rewards were intended by Providence.

In another instance, also in Time and Tide,<sup>35</sup> Ruskin maintained that manual work alone was degrading although wholesome. While this at first appears to be in violent opposition to Carlyle, Ruskin went on to say: "A highly bred court lady, rightly interested in politics and literature, is a much finer type of the human creature than a servant of all work, however clever and honest."<sup>36</sup>

Although the social attitude which he conveyed was one which would not come from Carlyle, nonetheless, the two were essentially in agreement. Carlyle, as was shown, fully believed in the superior capabilities and responsibilities resting with those of talent and education. They must, however, Carlyle felt, utilize their abilities to the fullest extent in the hardest work.

Some comment also should be made on the aftermath of these views. The whole concept of leadership and of the Hero that Carlyle envisioned has been grossly misinterpreted to suit the inclinations of its adopters,

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<sup>35</sup>Works, XVII, Time and Tide, p. 334.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., p. 423.

throughout the years since he first wrote of it. In simplest terms, Carlyle's men of inherent ability who were to rise as leaders did so in the rightness of God. Their strength as leaders or Heroes was in guiding others to realize and accept the miracle of this earth and God. In expressing ideas wider, in time, than Christianity alone, Carlyle saw in Christ the greatest Hero yet to be known.

The "right" and "might" which, thus, were connected with these beliefs came not from the plots of men, but in essence were "right" only through the divine element which was in their foundation. The idea of the Superman that held such an ascendant role in this century was, in fact, the antithesis of the intention of Carlyle. Yet in elaborating his beliefs and in bringing them within the realm of practical action, Carlyle, at the same time, made them available for a variety of interpretations.

Ruskin applied his theories on work extensively in his political and economic arguments. It is throughout these that his general correspondence with Carlyle can be seen, rather than in the works concerned, for the most part, with art where he became involved with such things as the exact meaning of labour in relation to artistic results. In A Joy For Ever, however, Ruskin could write, as would Carlyle, that:

"The world is so regulated by the laws of Providence, that a man's labour, well applied, is always amply sufficient to provide him during his life with all things needful to him, and not only with those, but with many pleasant objects of luxury; and yet farther, to procure him large intervals of healthful rest and serviceable leisure...But by those same laws of nature and Providence, if the labour of the nation or of the individual be misapplied, and much more if it be insufficient...suffering and want result, exactly in proportion to the indolence and improvidence...wherever you see want, or misery, or degradation, in this world about you, there, be sure, either industry has been wanting, or industry has been in error. It is not accident, it is not Heaven-commanded calamity, it is not the original and inevitable evil of man's nature, which fill your streets with lamentation, and your graves with prey. It is only that, when there should have been labour, there has been lasciviousness; and wilfulness, when there should have been subordination."<sup>37</sup>

One of the several dangers which England faced during the nineteenth century was increasingly irresponsible leadership coupled with a changing form of government. Speaking in general terms, so believed both Carlyle and Ruskin. The swift pace of the Industrial Revolution and its consequences, the French Revolution and other political thoughts from abroad, the altering sense of moral and spiritual values; all these factors with their separate and intermingling effects influenced government as it had

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<sup>37</sup>Works, XVI, A Joy For Ever, pp. 18-9.



evolved through past centuries.

In a broad sense, these changes were to be expected as a natural development in the course of history. On the other hand, in a narrower span of years, such as a lifetime, the scope of such progression could be magnified to, at the least, a disturbing degree. Again, Carlyle, as well as Ruskin, feared that Britain was rushing at a precipitous rate toward conditions which were already to be regretted and could soon be worse. They questioned the calibre of leadership in Britain, laws to transform the system of government, obligations of the government to its people, and conversely, the duty of the individual to the government. Both men offered definite plans to counteract the present and anticipated defects of the state.

Carlyle expressed concern for Britain's course of rule early in his writing. From rather a more particular interest in individuals as leaders and heroes, he wrote, as he grew older, with greater frequency about the role of government and the form which it should take.

Past and Present reveals that Carlyle valued highly the institutions which had been built by man, in Britain, to govern himself. They had been conceived and carried through with a nobility of purpose to sustain them. Of these he wrote:

Parliament and the Courts of Westminster

are venerable to me; how venerable; gray with a thousand years of honourable age! For a thousand years and more, Wisdom and faithful valour, struggling amid much Folly and greedy Baseness, not without most sad distortions in the struggle, have built them up; and they are as we see. For a thousand years, this English Nation has found them useful or supportable: they have served this English Nation's want; been a road to it through the abyss of Time. They are venerable, they are great and strong. And yet it is good to remember always that they are not the venerablest, nor the greatest, nor the strongest! Acts of Parliament are venerable; but if they correspond not with the writing on the 'Adamant Tablet', what are they? Properly their one element of venerableness, of strength or greatness, is, that they at all times correspond therewith as near as by human possibility they can. They are cherishing destruction in their bosom every hour that they continue otherwise.

Alas, how many causes that can plead well for themselves in the Courts of Westminster; and yet in the general Court of the Universe,<sup>38</sup> and free Soul of Man, have no word to utter!

The qualifications which he interposed are typical of Carlyle, and reflect, as was always predominant, his belief in the continual, but unachieved, struggle of man to perfect his life to God's wishes.

Although he praised the growth of government, Carlyle saw perils in the way of its continuance and, as noted, when he granted that the system was admirable, he also knew that it was open to faults. Imperfections, too, had arisen, and were more common, in the hierarchy of

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<sup>38</sup>Carlyle, Past and Present, p. 8.

rule below the sphere of pure governmental form. These were the flaws of the governing classes, the time-honoured aristocracy and squirearchy, particularly the latter who, with few other necessary pursuits, neglected their traditional obligations. Their lack of concern aroused questions regarding their worth, or as Carlyle stated:

Alas, we...have got perhaps a still harder thing to settle: the Divine Right of Squires. Did a God make this land of Britain, and give it to us all, that we might live there by honest labour; or did the Squires make it, and, - shut to the voice of any God, open only to a Devil's voice in this matter, - decide on giving it to themselves alone? This is now the sad question and 'divine right' we, in this unfortunate century, have got to settle! For there is no end of settlements; there will never be an end; the best settlement is but a temporary, partial one. Truly, all manner of rights, and adjustments of work and wages, here below, do verge gradually into error, into unbearable error, as the Time-flood bears us onward; and many a right, which used to be a duty one, and divine enough, turns out, in a new latitude of the Time-voyage, to have grown now altogether undivine! Turns out, - when the fatal hour and necessity for overhauling it arrives, - to have been, for some considerable while past, an inanity, a conventionality, a hollow simulacrum of use-and-wont; which, if it will still assert itself as a 'divine right', having now no divine duty to do, becomes a diabolic wrong; and, by soft means or by sharp, has to be sent travelling out of this world! Alas, 'intolerabilities' do now again in this new century 'cry to Heaven'; - or worse, do not cry, but in low wide-spread moan, lie as perishing, as if 'in Heaven there was no ear for them, and on Earth no ear.' 'Elevenpence half-pence a-week' in this world; and in the next world zero! And 'Sliding-Scales', and endless wriggings and wrestlings over mere 'Corn-Laws': a Governing Class, hired (it appears) at the rate of some fifty or seventy

millions a-year, which not only makes no attempt at governing, but will not, by any consideration, passionate entreaty, or even menace as yet, be persuaded to eat its victuals, shoot its partridges, and not strangle-out the general life by mis-governing! It cannot and it will not come to good.<sup>39</sup>

The anxiety of Carlyle about the nation's leaders and how they ruled was in the end almost always in regard to the resultant fate of the individual being governed. His interests lay with the poor and earnest labourer oppressed by economic conditions and unaided by his leaders. As always, Carlyle argued for the right and necessity to work and he believed that government should support this need. The crisis of these years appeared to rest chiefly on the inability of the individual to fulfil his life work; to alleviate this became the mission of the state:

It is of importance that his grand reformation were begun; that Corn-Law Debatings and other jargon, little less than delirious in such a time, had fled far away, and left us room to begin! For the evil has grown practical, extremely conspicuous; if it be not seen and provided for, the blindest fool will have to feel it ere long. There is much that can wait; but there is something also that cannot wait. With millions of eager Working Men imprisoned in 'Impossibility' and Poor-Law Bastilles, it is time that some means of dealing with them were trying to become 'possible'! Of the Government of England, of all articulate-speaking functionaries, real and imaginary Aristocracies, of me and of thee,

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<sup>39</sup>Carlyle, Critical and Miscellaneous Essays, VI, "Baillie the Covenanter", pp. 236-7.

it is imperatively demanded, "How do you mean to manage these men? Where are they to find a supportable existence? What is to become of them, - and of you!"<sup>40</sup>

Carlyle thus saw that reform was needed; yet to achieve the objectives of his philosophy, he maintained that political reform alone was not enough. It must, at the same time, be accompanied by a moral reform, for while political revival "can indeed root-out the weeds... it leaves the ground empty, - ready either for noble fruits, or for new worse tares!"<sup>41</sup>

In his determination of the form that government should take, Carlyle was sure that it must not be democracy. Despite the arguments of his friends Ralph Waldo Emerson and Charles Norton, Carlyle found in democracy only the horror of the French Revolution along with poor leadership by inept mass selection. Democracy stood in the way of the rise of a leader, a hero, for the majority of men were unable to recognize or appreciate such a man. Carlyle went so far as to state that:

Literature is our Parliament too. Printing, which comes necessarily out of Writing, I say often, is equivalent to Democracy: invent Writing, Democracy is inevitable. Writing brings Printing; brings universal everyday extempore Printing, as we see at present. Whoever can speak, speaking now to the whole nation, becomes a power, a branch of government, with inalienable weight in law-making,

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<sup>40</sup>Carlyle, Past and Present, p. 216.

<sup>41</sup>Carlyle, Critical and Miscellaneous Essays, IV, "Corn-Law Rhymes", p. 205.



in all acts of authority. It matters not what rank he has, what revenues or garnitures: the requisite thing is, that he have a tongue which others will listen to; this and nothing more is requisite. The nation is governed by all that has tongue in the nation: Democracy is virtually there. Add only, that whatsoever power exists will have itself, by and by, organised; working secretly under bandages, obscurations, obstructions, it will never rest till it get to work free, unencumbered, visible to all. Democracy virtually extant will insist on becoming palpably extant.<sup>42</sup>

Ruskin, it may be said, shared exactly these same sympathies, for he was as well a thorough foe of democracy. He agreed with Carlyle, however, for differing reasons. Ruskin regretted the strong desire of men to advance their social class, and democracy, especially as exemplified by the spirit of the French Revolution, would allow this climb. It would in fact in its theoretical state, eliminate all the class distinctions which Ruskin found of value. As Carlyle questioned the value of writing, so did Ruskin criticize the education which would further men's status in the world. Ruskin noted that educators and economists believed that everyone should be uppermost in the world and that through the education which each man deserved and should receive each also would have his own carriage. Far more preferable, felt Ruskin, that men should remain uneducated.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>42</sup>Carlyle, On Heroes, p. 152.

<sup>43</sup>Works, XVII, Time and Tide, pp. 396-7.

Many were the perils of democracy, then, and they exhibited themselves with greater frequency in Britain. In condemning this trend in acknowledged support of Carlyle, Ruskin supplied a pointed recollection:

Nor need we want examples, among the inferior creatures of dissoluteness, as well as resoluteness, in government. I once saw democracy finely illustrated by the beetles of North Switzerland, who by universal suffrage, and elytric acclamation, one May twilight, carried it, that they would fly over the Lake of Zug; and flew short, to the great disfigurement of the Lake of Zug...over some leagues square, and to the close of the cock-chaffer democracy for that year.<sup>44</sup>

Ruskin's basis for criticism of leadership and government was otherwise quite similar to that of Carlyle. Ruskin, too, realized that the qualities of the past were being obscured in the present. With these beliefs, what do Carlyle and Ruskin suggest be done?

Carlyle offered proposals; some which were theoretical and some which were, in the utmost, practical. They were all based, however, on a strength of leadership evolving from his concept of the hero. A government required, according to Carlyle,

The man of intellect at the top of affairs: this is the aim of all constitutions and revolutions, if they have any aim. For the man of true intellect, as I assert and believe always, is the noblehearted man withal, the true, just, humane and valiant man. Get him for governor, all is got; fail to get

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<sup>44</sup>Works, XVII, Munera Pulveris, p. 249.

him, though you had Constitutions plentiful as blackberries, and a Parliament in every village, there is nothing yet got!<sup>45</sup>

Carlyle saw in the philosophy of the hero the ideal system of government, but he also realized that this was, in actuality, unobtainable. He believed, however, that these ideals did in fact exist and that one must seek to attain them as far as possible. Consequently, he stated the apex for which to strive in the ideal government which he envisioned:

Find in any country the Ablest Man that exists there; raise him to the supreme place, and loyally reverence him: you have a perfect government for that country; no ballot-box, parliamentary eloquence, voting, constitution-building, or other machinery whatsoever can improve it a whit. It is in the perfect state; an ideal country. The Ablest Man; he means also the truest-hearted, justest, the Noblest Man: what he tells us to do must be precisely the wisest, fittest, that we could anywhere or anyhow learn; - the thing which it will in all ways behove us, with right loyal thankfulness, and nothing doubting, to do! Our doing and life were then, so far as government could regulate it, well regulated; that were the ideal of constitutions.<sup>46</sup>

Able men, Carlyle held, were living throughout Britain at the time. Their present life was involved in creating a small world of good within the environs of their daily existence. They were individually silent in the face of the desecration being wrought on the country.

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<sup>45</sup>Carlyle, On Heroes, p. 157.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., p. 182.

The time had come, however, for them to "sit silent no longer".<sup>47</sup> In Chartism,<sup>48</sup> he visualized the most immediate action for these leaders, and particularly, an action for the upper classes which would be an initial step toward reform. Carlyle thought that a prime necessity was the understanding of the lower classes by those in authority. A realization of the factors that caused them distress, and a comprehension of what these people were struggling to gain would in themselves provide improvement, for in understanding lay the remedy.

The Heroes, the Able Men, belonged in their role as leaders to one of the two groups which Carlyle saw imperative in a healthy and strong state:

Aristocracy and Priesthood, a Governing Class and a Teaching Class: these two, sometimes separate, and endeavouring to harmonise themselves, sometimes conjoined as one, and the King a Pontiff-King: - there did no Society exist without these two vital elements, there will none exist. It lies in the very nature of man: you will visit no remotest village in the most republican country of the world, where virtually or actually you do not find these two powers at work. Man, little as he may suppose it, is necessitated to obey superiors. He is a social being in virtue of this necessity; nay, he could not be gregarious otherwise. He obeys those whom he esteems better than himself, wiser, braver; and will forever obey such; and even be ready and delighted to do it.<sup>49</sup>

The assumption of power by the most able men was

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<sup>47</sup>Carlyle, Latter-Day Pamphlets, p. 27.

<sup>48</sup>Carlyle, Critical and Miscellaneous Essays, VI, "Chartism", p. 113.

<sup>49</sup>Carlyle, Past and Present, p. 207.

applied by Carlyle most practically to Downing Street. A forceful, God-inspired leader in this place alone could impel reform of the greatest vitality and effectiveness.<sup>50</sup> At the same time, the Queen should be empowered to appoint, through her Prime Minister, six or ten Secretaries to official seats in Parliament. These appointments should be purely at her discretion, and with the intention of securing men of proven high ability who are not responsible to a constituency as a party member.<sup>51</sup>

Ruskin's ideas on government were, in their essential elements, very similar to those of Carlyle. As was discussed, both men expressed vehement opposition to the tenets of democracy, and likewise both favoured a government which led rather than one which was led. Ruskin, in Notes on the Construction of Sheepfolds, advocated a monarchy, saying:

All true and right government is Monarchical, and of the head. What is its best form, is a totally different question; but unless it act for the people, and not as representative of the people, it is no government at all; and one of the grossest blockheadisms of the English in the present day, is their idea of sending men to Parliament to "represent their opinions."<sup>52</sup>

Years later in Fors Clavigera, Ruskin stated that,

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<sup>50</sup>Carlyle, Latter-Day Pamphlets, pp. 210-1.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., p. 97.

<sup>52</sup>Works, XII, Notes on the Construction of Sheepfolds, p. 552.



depending on the governors, any form of rule would be successful;<sup>53</sup> yet, he qualified this liberality by setting strict requirements for his governors and equally rigid obedience from the populace. He differed from Carlyle in the further development of his ideas, as when he brought into government the concept of the wise and kind leading their opposites. This instance is typical of his most common divergences from Carlyle. Ruskin maintained an innocence regarding human characteristics, an idealism which contrasted in numerous instances with Carlyle's less optimistic, perhaps more realistic views. For example, in Munera Pulveris, Ruskin wrote:

Understand, then, once for all, that no form of government, provided it be a government at all, is, as such, to be either condemned or praised, or contested for in anywise, but by fools. But all forms of government are good just so far as they attain this one vital necessity of policy - that the wise and kind, few or many, shall govern the unwise and unkind; and they are evil so far as they miss of this, or reverse it. Nor does the form, in any case, signify one whit, but its firmness, and adaptation to the need; for if there be many foolish persons in a state, and few wise, then it is good that the few govern; and if there be many wise, and few foolish, then it is good that the many govern; and if many be wise, yet one wiser, then it is good that one should govern; and so on.<sup>54</sup>

Now in his fundamental principles, Ruskin's beliefs here differed only slightly from those of Carlyle; but, his

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<sup>53</sup>Works, XXVIII, Fors Clavigera, p. 651.

<sup>54</sup>Works, XVII, Munera Pulveris, pp. 248-9.

elaborations on these basic ideas were apt to hide his basic harmony with Carlyle on this subject.

Ruskin was closest to Carlyle when he spoke on the role of individual leaders, for his words approximated the concept of the Hero:

My continual aim has been to show the eternal superiority of some men to others, sometimes even of one man to all others; and to show also the advisability of appointing such persons or person to guide, to lead, or on occasion even to compel and subdue, their inferiors, according to their own better knowledge and wiser will.<sup>55</sup>

In the practice and specific duties of the government, Ruskin was explicit. Again, in many of the details, he differed, sometimes considerably, from Carlyle, but in the power that leaders were to assume, and in the functions necessary to government, he was in accord. Discussing the part which the great old families of England should play in its leadership, he wrote:

Therefore, the youth of this landed aristocracy would be trained, in my schools, to these two great callings, not by which, but in which, they are to live.

They would be trained, all of them, in perfect science of war, and in perfect science of essential law. And from their body should be chosen the captains and the judges of England, its advocates, and generally its State officers.... This then, recasting it for you into brief view, would be the entire scheme of State authorities: -

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<sup>55</sup>Works, XVII, Unto This Last, p. 74.

(1) The King: exercising, as part both of his prerogative and his duty, the office of a supreme judge....

(2) Supreme judges appointed by national election; exercising sole authority in courts of final appeal.

(3) Ordinary judges....

(4) State officers charged with the direction of public agency in matters of public utility.

(5) Bishops, charged with offices of supervision and aid, to family by family, and person by person.

(6) The officers of war, of various ranks.

(7) The officers of public instruction, of various ranks.<sup>56</sup>

Contrast this statement with one offered by Carlyle in Past and Present:

Let no man despair of Governments who look on these two sentries at the Horse-Guards and our United-Service Clubs! I could conceive an Emigration Service, a Teaching Service, considerable varieties of United and Separate Services, of the due thousands strong, all effective as this Fighting Service is; all doing their work, like it; - which work, much more than fighting, is henceforth the necessity of these New Ages we are got into! Much lies among us, convulsively, nigh desperately struggling to be born.<sup>57</sup>

Although Carlyle was emphasizing a different point, the similarity of intention is clear. In their concepts of government, as in those on work, they shared many of the same plans. These give credence to the association and close relationship of their thoughts.

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<sup>56</sup>Works, XVII, Time and Tide, pp. 440-1.

<sup>57</sup>Carlyle, Past and Present, p. 225.

Art was an omnipresent factor throughout the works of Ruskin from the opening chapter of Modern Painters, even too from the efforts of childhood; the principles or the appreciation of art permeated all that he believed and lectured and wrote. The passing years and the new concerns with politics and economics failed to abate this primary interest; indeed, these served instead to enlarge the scope of art's domain. Ruskin's interpretations of the functions of art were far-reaching to the point where a diversity of subjects could be encompassed within the sphere of art's dictums. These art principles were, in the long run, a strand which entwined Ruskin's pronouncements on so many subjects and gave them an embracing philosophic base.

A base it was that was composed more of feeling than of logic; a foundation of personal tastes, and of ideas original with their upholder. Here one can offer credit to Ruskin which is his due. He was not, in the intellectual sense, a philosopher and he was not influenced essentially by any but the graphic arts. He envisioned, nonetheless, through and within this framework of art, a reformation of Britain which in its sincerity and fervent purity of purpose was a noble cause. The truth of much of the criticism aimed at Ruskin is undeniable, yet from his initial defense and interpretation of Turner, one must admire the strength of the artistic and aesthetic values

which forced these cries for a revival of what he understood to be past virtues.

In his interpretations of art, Ruskin elicited from an artist's works, or from even as little as a single painting, an immense amount of information. Deductions about both the artistic technique and intent, and about the meaning of the work to the viewer were developed in detail. He passed definitive judgments on the perfectness of paintings and artists in comparisons to others, while he confidently determined the moral character of an artist and his contemporaries from the artist's work.

In the light of present esteem, an Oxford lecture on "The Relation Between Michael Angelo and Tintoret" is of particular interest. Within this lecture, Ruskin notes:

"Those are the four essentials of the greatest art. I repeat them, they are easily learned.

1. Faultless and permanent workmanship.
2. Serenity in state or action.
3. The Face principal, not the body.
4. And the Face free from either vice or pain...

"Those are the four great changes wrought by Michael Angelo. I repeat them:

I'll work for good.  
 Tumult for Peace.  
 The Flesh of Man for his Spirit.  
 And the Curse of God for His blessing...

"Nearly every existing work by Michael Angelo is an attempt to execute something beyond his power, coupled with a fevered desire that his power may be acknowledged. He is always matching himself either against the Greeks whom he cannot rival, or against rivals whom he cannot forget...



"Tintoret, on the contrary, works in the consciousness of supreme strength, which cannot be wounded by neglect, and is only to be thwarted by time and space. He knows precisely all that art can accomplish under given conditions; determines absolutely how much of what can be done he will himself for the moment choose to do; and fulfils his purpose with as much ease as if, through his human body, were working the great forces of nature..."<sup>58</sup>

Ruskin's great work in which he equates art with history and morality is, of course, The Stones of Venice. Here was a stated intent to show that the art and architecture of a people were so closely related to their moral nature and conduct that these latter were fully revealed by a study of their buildings and other art. Aside from the standards of which art is good, and, conversely, bad, which this study presumed, The Stones of Venice was an early example of the interpretive power that he ascribed to art and that he employed throughout his writings to present arguments concerning economics, politics, and a variety of other subjects.

As Slade Professor of Fine Art, Ruskin was endowed with an ideal opportunity to express his growing concern for the direction in which he saw Britain proceeding. This occasioned, undoubtedly, a great deal of the contrived intermingling of art and social history which increased through his years of lecturing, when, often unfor-

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<sup>58</sup>Works, XXII, "The Relation Between Michael Angelo and Tintoret", pp. 85-7.

tunately, art was made secondary to more ardent interests. The Oxford lectures grew steadily into a vehicle for other interests until they sadly became, all too often, an occasion for laughter or ridicule.

The important factor remains, still, that Ruskin had as strong an inspiration for much of his preaching as did reformers backed by different motives. As was true in Ruskin's situation, an artistic or aesthetic foundation could be justifiably sound when compared with the perhaps more practical bases of comparable philosophers of social and economic action. Art, for Ruskin, was not an occasional appreciation; it was one ever-present part of life.

Such concepts of the range and power of art were alien to the beliefs of Carlyle who had but a slight appreciation of any of the fine arts. Such lack of interest was understandable, on the whole, for neither his stern religious background nor his rural boyhood encouraged the pursuit of the embellishments to what was considered a sound education. Thus, he remained both formally and basically untrained in painting, architecture, and sculpture; so it is not surprising that he was unmoved by them.

Carlyle's feelings consequently were often unaligned with Ruskin's most heartfelt interests. Carlyle's thanks for and appreciation of Ruskin's books have been noted, but these expressions are generally in support of the

social aspects presented, or words of cheer and friendship. Carlyle probably hoped that Ruskin might suppress his artistic propensities and concentrate on struggles of the highest value. As he pointed out in Shooting Niagara: and After?, not in particular reference to Ruskin:

"First, then, with regard to Art, Poetry and the like, which at present is esteemed the supreme of aims for vocal genius, I hope my literary Aristos will pause, and seriously make question before embarking on that; and perhaps will end, in spite of the Swarmeries abroad, by devoting his divine faculty to something far higher, far more vital to us. Poetry? It is not pleasant singing that we want, but wise and earnest speaking: - 'Art', 'High Art' &c. are very fine and ornamental, but only to persons sitting at their ease: to persons still wrestling with deadly chaos, and still fighting for dubious existence, they are a mockery rather. Our Aristos, well meditating, will perhaps discover that the genuine 'Art' in all times is a higher synonym for God Almighty's Facts, - which come to us direct from Heaven, but in so abstruse a condition, and cannot be read at all till the better intellect interpret them. That is the real function of our Aristos and of his divine gift. Let him think well of this! He will find that all real 'Art' is definable as Fact, or say as the disimprisoned 'Soul of Fact'; that any other kind of Art, Poetry or High Art is quite idle in comparison."<sup>59</sup>

In this respect, therefore, the two were separated by a chasm which was never to be bridged by understanding, for Ruskin wrote through convictions on art which were the base for all else that he did.

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<sup>59</sup>Carlyle, Critical and Miscellaneous Essays, VII, "Shooting Niagara: and After?", p. 220.

With this background, Carlyle rarely made seriously detailed criticisms or comments on the function of the arts. In one of the most interesting of these few, Carlyle derided the erection of statues, especially those with little aesthetic appeal, that served to honour or to memorialize men who failed to deserve remembrance. Such art perverted not only artistic beauty but the good qualities and values which it could not with honesty represent. As he wrote:

"Of the sculptural talent manifest in these Brazen Images I say nothing, though much were to be said. For indeed, if there is no talent displayed in them but a perverse one, are not we to consider it a happiness, in that strange case? This big swollen Gambler, and gluttonous hapless 'spiritual Daniel Lambert', deserved a coal-shaft from his brother mortals: let at least his column be ugly! - Nevertheless ugly columns and images are, in themselves, a real evil. They too preach ugliness after their sort; and have a certain effect, the whole of which is bad. They sanction and consecrate artistic botching, pretentious futility, and the horrible doctrine that this Universe is a Cockney Nightmare, - which no creature ought for a moment to believe, or listen to. In brief, they encourage an already-ugly Population to become in a thousand ways uglier. They too, for their ugliness, - did not the infinitely deeper ugliness of the thing they commemorate absorb all consideration of that, - would deserve, and do in fact incessantly solicit, abolition from the sight of man."<sup>60</sup>

In the realm of art as appreciated by Ruskin, Carlyle, then, remained forever a stranger; unsympathetic, mainly,

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<sup>60</sup>Carlyle, Latter-Day Pamphlets, p. 223.

to the joys and the values which Ruskin drew from it. His truest sentiments are neatly summed up in an excerpt from The Life of John Sterling:

"It is expected in this Nineteenth Century that a man of culture shall understand and worship Art: among the windy gospels addressed to our poor Century there are few louder than this of Art..."<sup>61</sup>

Caution is necessary, though, in interpreting Carlyle's use of the word "art", for he raised it to hold a more comprehensive meaning than that associated purely with the visual arts as such. Rather than the picture itself, the symbol became important; but rather than the symbol from the picture, man, the great man, became the symbol. Thus, man and the symbol of what he could represent became the concept of art. This symbolism was extended to include and relate the greatest symbols, those of religion, as art:

"Of this latter sort, symbols are all true Works of Art: in them (if thou know a Work of Art from a Daub of Artifice) wilt thou discern Eternity looking through Time; the Godlike rendered visible. Here too may an extrinsic value gradually super-add itself: thus certain Iliads, and the like, have, in three-thousand years, attained quite new significance. But nobler than all in this kind are the Lives of heroic god-inspired Men; for what other Work of Art is so divine? In Death too, in the Death of the Just, as the last perfection of a Work of Art, may we not discern symbolic meaning? In that

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<sup>61</sup>Carlyle, The Life of John Sterling, p. 154.



divinely transfigured sleep, as of Victory, resting over the beloved face which now knows thee no more, read (if thou canst for tears) the confluence of Time with Eternity, and some gleam of the latter peering through.

"Highest of all Symbols are those wherein the Artist or Poet has risen into Prophet, and all men can recognise a present God, and worship the same: I mean religious Symbols. ...If you ask to what height man has carried it in this manner, look on our divinest Symbol: on Jesus of Nazareth, and his Life, and his Biography, and what followed therefrom. Higher has the human Thought not yet reached: this is Christianity and Christendom; a Symbol of quite perennial, infinite character; whose significance will ever demand to be anew inquired into, and anew made manifest."<sup>62</sup>

This sense of what Carlyle understands art to include is important, for after Sartor Resartus it is repeated in later works with the same connotations; a definition detached from Ruskin's and, indeed, the accepted meaning.

The industrial revolution in Britain generated, as has been noted, a metamorphosis which had far-reaching effects on all spheres of life. It was, in fact, the prime element which vividly distinguishes the transition from the eighteenth century to the nineteenth with concrete and visible evidence. It occasioned drastic changes

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<sup>62</sup>Carlyle, Sartor Resartus, pp. 154-5.

in living: the move from country to city, new relationships between employers and employees, new types of housing, and new problems of poverty, disease and misery. At the same time, this warless revolution affected the beliefs, regarded as traditional, of the working classes. Religious, social and moral values were questioned and violated.

Regarded in a very basic sense, these changes, evolving from the industrial revolution in combination with other factors, represented a necessity for man to redefine his concepts of his role in this world and his relationship to others. This, it is true, is a task for every man in every generation; however, the magnitude and scope of developments which occurred from the last third of the eighteenth century, interrupting the pattern of generations, were particularly harsh.

While the other ideas discussed in this chapter are entities which have had a long history of philosophic interpretation, the conflict of man with the industrialism represented by this revolution was, in its complexity, a new problem of the age.

Between Ruskin and Carlyle a difference in outlook on the role of industry is soon apparent. For Ruskin, in the first instance, the factory and the mechanical device clashed with his fervent devotion to the past. Particularly this is true when his views of history were so

often determined solely from an aesthetic interpretation. Ruskin's analysis of a nation's character through its art and architecture remained basically theoretical and generally erroneous when it failed to encompass other vital aspects of the nation's life. The attraction of the past to Ruskin was the beauty of the churches, the houses and countryside, and the art. While Britain had shared this history in a like manner with Italy, France and, indeed, all of Europe, Ruskin saw in the rise of industrialism a force which could destroy a great nation as he conceived of it.

In his struggle for immediate action and remedy, Ruskin usually shaped his criticism of industrialism so that it was aimed at the individual and exposed the personal effects which would result from industrial growth. Ruskin, throughout his life, maintained an appeal derived from his direct contacts with people. His interest in teaching at The Working Men's College and his lectures as Slade Professor of Fine Art at Oxford directed this closeness with his audience and helped to establish the personal relationship which permeates most of the later, primarily social and political, writings.

The suggestions and pleas for reform which Ruskin urged were not predominately for a philosophic revival with the broad appeal to humanity as were those which emanated from Carlyle. Instead, they were very often

ideas which were concerned with alleviating human misery through the direct acts of his audience; and, the industrial revolution had generated, in Ruskin's opinion, many of these existing and developing ills.

The reluctance to accept change was, as has been mentioned, one factor at the base of Ruskin's dislike of industrial development. Yet the urbanization, the factories and the problems evolving from these were not his sole concern. The function of machinery in agriculture along with the future and happiness of the farmer were of especial importance as, for example, when he wrote that man was happy in labour without machinery and the idleness resulting from its use:

"I can show you examples, millions of them, of happy people, made happy by their own industry. Farm after farm I can show you in Bavaria, Switzerland, the Tyrol, and such other places, where men and women are perfectly happy and good, without any iron servants. ...Or bring me, - for I am not inconvincible by any kind of evidence, - bring me the testimony of an English family or two to their increased felicity (with machines). Or if you cannot do so much as that, can you convince even themselves of it? They are perhaps happy, if only they knew how happy they were..."<sup>63</sup>

The contrast which Ruskin drew between the farmers of the Continent and those of Britain is worth noting, for it emphasizes his idealism toward a period which, for

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<sup>63</sup>Works, XXVII, Fors Clavigera, p. 88.

the British, had passed irrevocably, even before the time of his birth.

Areas in which machinery could be utilized ought to be drastically limited, Ruskin felt. Indeed, in effect, he wished to eliminate all but what he decided were the most indispensable occasions for its service. Concerning these uses, he said in a letter from Fors Clavigera:

"The use of machinery in agriculture throws a certain number of persons out of wholesome employment, who must thenceforward either do nothing, or mischief. The use of machinery in art destroys the national intellect; and, finally, renders all luxury impossible. All machinery needful in ordinary life to supplement human or animal labour may be moved by wind or water; while steam, or any modes of heat-power, may only be employed justifiably under extreme or special conditions of need; as for speed on main lines of communication, and for raising water from great depths, or other such work beyond human strength. / (dagger in text showing footnote of Ruskin's) Foolish people are continually quibbling and stupefying themselves about the word "machine". Briefly, any instrument is a machine so far as its action is, in any particular, or moment, beyond the control of the human hand. A violin, a pencil, and a plough, are tools, not machines. A grinding organ, or a windmill, is a machine, not a tool: often the two are combined; thus a lathe is a machine, and the workman's chisel, used at it, a tool."<sup>64</sup>

In *Munera Pulveris*, he repeated essentially these same restrictions although he later qualified to some ex-

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<sup>64</sup>Works, XXVIII, Fors Clavigera, pp. 654-5.



tent the value of machinery which he suggested in the following paragraph:

"The value of instruments consists, first, in their power of shortening labour, or otherwise accomplishing what human strength unaided could not. The kinds of work which are severally best accomplished by hand or by machine; - the effect of machinery in gathering and multiplying population; together with the conceivable uses of machinery on a colossal scale in accomplishing mighty and useful works, hitherto unthought of, such as the deepening of large river channels; - changing the surface of mountainous districts; - irrigating tracts of desert in the torrid zone; - breaking up, and thus rendering capable of quicker fusion, edges of ice in the northern and southern Arctic seas, etc., so rendering parts of the earth habitable which hitherto have been lifeless, are to be studied under this head."<sup>65</sup>

It could be only speculation, perhaps, to attempt to determine if Ruskin's concept of the utility of machinery intentionally included countries which, for the most part, were far from British shores.

In the previous year (1870), he discussed the establishment of a school of art, and he linked its success directly with the diminishing of machines and industry. In a comparison with the years that followed, this supposition has proved to be fallacious; although, according to their taste some might presume it to contain a degree of accuracy. Nonetheless, the environment of a nation will not preclude a school of art. It may, indeed, hinder

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<sup>65</sup>Works, XVII, Munera Pulveris, p. 156.

rather than encourage a freedom of self-expression and development; however, if so, it will produce a reaction against this oppression from the soul of the art form. Here again, Ruskin reflected the aura of a Europe which had not yet experienced the intrusion of industrialism, and which was his solace from the troubles facing him at home. Of the flowering of art he said:

"That is impossible lovely cities, carefully planned and controlled, you say! it may be so. I have nothing to do with its possibility, but only with its indispensability. More than that must be possible, however, before you can have a school of art; namely, that you find places elsewhere than in England, or at least in otherwise unserviceable parts of England, for the establishment of manufactories needing the help of fire...and to reduce such manufactures to their lowest limit, so that nothing may ever be made of iron that can as effectually be made of wood or stone; and nothing moved by steam that can be as effectually moved by natural forces. And observe, that for all mechanical effort required in social life and in cities, water power is infinitely more than enough; for anchored mills on the large rivers, and mills moved by sluices from reservoirs filled by the tide, will give you command of any quantity of constant motive power you need.

Agriculture by the hand, then, and absolute refusal or banishment of unnecessary igneous force, are the first conditions of a school of art in any country. And until you do this, be it soon or late, things will continue in that triumphant state to which, for want of finer art, your mechanism has brought them; - that, though England is deafened with spinning wheels, her people have not clothes - though she is black with digging of fuel, they die of cold - and though she has sold her soul for gain, they die of hunger. Stay in that triumph, if you choose; but be assured of this, it is not one

which the fine arts will ever share with you."<sup>66</sup>

The Guild of St. George became the great effort in Ruskin's opposition to the evils which he saw encroaching upon the traditions of Britain. Founded in 1871, St. George's Fund, then Company, then Guild, was organized to further in practice his visions of an ideal nation. The volume of his attempts to establish this group was worthy of admiration, while the response to and labours of the organization were pathetic in their futile attempts to alter the inevitable course of development in Britain. In response to criticism of his position on the industrial age, Ruskin tempered to some extent his actual opinion and expressed a leniency in one of his Fors Clavigera letters which was nullified in other proposals. After expressing willingness to construct a railway when "I think one necessary" and referring the reader to the uses of machinery which he advocated in Munera Pulveris, noted earlier in this section, Ruskin said to his followers:

"What is required of the members of St. George's Company is, not that they should never travel by railroads, nor that they should abjure machinery; but that they should never travel unnecessarily, or in wanton haste; and that they should never do with a machine what can be done with hands and arms, while hands and arms are idle."<sup>67</sup>

In contrast with this more liberal view, he strongly

<sup>66</sup>Works, XX, Lectures On Art, pp. 113-4.

<sup>67</sup>Works, XXVIII, Fors Clavigera, pp. 247-8.

opposed modern techniques for building which included machinery. Once again, he indirectly related his ideas to his aesthetic values which would support these judgments:

"...Nay, even the use of machinery other than the common rope and pulley, for the lifting of weights, is degrading to architecture; the invention of expedients for the raising of enormous stones has always been a characteristic of partly savage or corrupted races. A block of marble not larger than a cart which a couple of oxen could carry, and a cross-beam, with a couple of pulleys, raise, is as large as should generally be used in any building..."<sup>68</sup>

The definition of architectural beauty or of artistic taste thus provided the weapon as well as the direction in the disapproval of industrial development.

To Carlyle, on the other hand, industrial growth presented a much different face; one which showed a number of virtues arising from the increasing use of new machinery and methods. These developments offered, when utilized properly, spiritual and concrete advantages to both the nation and the individual.

This encouragement of industrialism, however, must be accepted with the reservations and cautions which one might expect from Carlyle. He was aware of the evils which the industrial revolution had intensified or had brought into existence. He denounced the materialism which accompanied this revolution and condemned the greater

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<sup>68</sup>Works, XX, Aratra Pentelici, p.305.

disparity that it occasioned between the rich and the poor. Furthermore, in harmony with Ruskin, Carlyle decried the filth and noise which seemed a part of industry, as well as the ruin of verdant countryside.

Yet overpowering these more than minor criticisms was Carlyle's concept that the forces of industrialism were, when fully examined, forces which would serve for the ultimate good of man. Also, they were doing good at the present time even prior to the reforms which would be of such value.

A further contrast in their views of industry resulted from differing views of the past. Carlyle was not working to revert to the life of any former period while denying the present industrial development of Britain. In his admiration for the past, he extracted ideas of former virtue and attempted to adopt them into his age without altering its basic structure as far as industrialism was concerned.

Carlyle's concern for individuals and his particular fascination with their role as leaders made his judgments on their relationship to industry interesting ones. Here again was the reaffirmation that the individual and the terms on which he bases his life are vital; that man's duty is ever before him, regardless of the external circumstances. The man of industry, therefore, has an equal responsibility and opportunity with a man of any calling. In the Latter-Day Pamphlets, for example, Carlyle wrote that:



"The beaver intellect, so long as it steadfastly refuses to be vulpine, and answers the tempter pointing out short routes to it with an honest "No, no", is truly respectable to me; and many a highflying speaker and singer whom I have known, has appeared to me much less of a developed man than certain of my mill-owning, agricultural, commercial, mechanical, or otherwise industrial friends, who have held their peace all their days and gone on in the silent state."<sup>69</sup>

He was even more widely separated in belief from Ruskin when he represented the leaders of industry as "Captains of the World" and assigned to them a task only a little less significant than that given to Heroes:

"The Leaders of Industry, if Industry is ever to be led, are virtually the Captains of the World; if there be no nobleness in them, there will never be an Aristocracy more. But let the Captains of Industry consider: once again, are they born of other clay than the old Captains of Slaughter; doomed forever to be no Chivalry, but a mere goldplated Doggery, - what the French well name Canaille, 'Doggery' with more or less gold carrion at its disposal? Captains of Industry are the true Fighters, henceforth recognisable as the only true ones: Fighters against Chaos, Necessity and the Devils and Jotuns; and lead on Mankind in that great, and alone true, and universal warfare; the stars in their courses fighting for them, and all Heaven and all Earth saying audibly, Well done!"<sup>70</sup>

As is shown here, industry and its leaders definitely were acknowledged by Carlyle as an integral part of society; he raised no suggestions to eliminate or reduce their functions.

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<sup>69</sup>Carlyle, Latter-Day Pamphlets, p. 158.

<sup>70</sup>Carlyle, Past and Present, pp. 232-3.

Actually, in contrast with Ruskin's arguments against industrialism, Carlyle based his support of it upon two points: first, industry was playing the major role in one of the great obligations which he felt to make up Britain's role in history. Of this he wrote:

"To this English People in World-History, there have been, shall I prophesy, Two grand tasks assigned? Huge-looming through the dim tumult of the always incommensurable Present Time, outlines of two tasks disclose themselves: the grand Industrial task of conquering some half or more of this Terraqueous Planet for the use of man; then secondly, the grand Constitutional task of sharing, in some pacific endurable manner, the fruit of said conquest, and showing all people how it might be done. These I will call their two tasks, discernible hitherto in World-History: in both of these they have made respectable though unequal progress. Steamengines, ploughshares, pickaxes; what is meant by conquering this Planet, they partly know. Elective franchise, ballot-box, representative assembly; how to accomplish sharing of that conquest, they do not so well know..."<sup>71</sup>

Consequently, from this viewpoint, any advancement in industrial techniques and abilities offered a furtherance in achieving one half of this ultimate goal. Of their abilities to establish successfully and spread a valid philosophy of government, he was less sure. He also reflected these qualms as to Britain's political ability in Past and Present where he likewise noted the results achieved through work:

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<sup>71</sup>Carlyle, Critical and Miscellaneous Essays, VI, "Chartism", p. 160.

"Of all the Nations in the world at present the English are the stupidest in speech, the wisest in action. As good as a 'dumb' Nation, I say, who cannot speak, and have never yet spoken, - spite of the Shakespeares and Miltons who show us what possibilities there are! - O Mr. Bull, I look in that surly face of thine with a mixture of pity and laughter, yet also with wonder and veneration....Nature alone knows thee, acknowledges the bulk and strength of thee: thy Epic, unsung in words, is written in huge characters on the face of this Planet, - sea-moles, cotton-trades, railways, fleets and cities, Indian Empires, Americas, New Hollands; legible throughout the Solar System!"<sup>72</sup>

A further explanation can also be made for the favour with which Carlyle looked upon industrialism. Above the inadequacies and flaws in this new manufacturing system, Carlyle championed its close ties with his philosophy of work. Through the advantages of machinery and factories, he envisioned the projects for improving lives which could be accomplished. He also realized that here were conditions which could, ideally, provide useful work for each man precisely as he was emphasizing its vitalness and worth. Beyond this, the newly conceived class of leaders which industrialism was producing could, he felt, thus become the disciples of his theories of work. Carlyle believed that work was the foundation of life and he saw in facets of industry the scope for man's beneficent occupation.

Thus, to Carlyle, the promise of its potential good overpowered industrialism's present evils. Work, in its

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<sup>72</sup>Carlyle, Past and Present, p. 138.

necessity and desirability, might become a strength to make man strive beyond a search only for wealth.

"Industrial work, still under bondage to Mammon, the rational soul of it not yet awakened, is a tragic spectacle. Men in the rapidest motion and self-motion; restless, with convulsive energy, as if driven by Galvanism, as if possessed by a Devil; tearing asunder mountains, - to no purpose, for Mammonism is always Midas-eared! This is sad, on the face of it. Yet courage: the beneficent Destinies, kind in their sternness, are apprising us that this cannot continue. Labour is not a devil, even while encased in Mammonism; Labour is ever an imprisoned god, writhing unconsciously or consciously to escape out of Mammonism!... Show me a People energetically busy; heaving, struggling, all shoulders at the wheel; their heart pulsing, every muscle swelling, with man's energy and will; - I show you a People of whom great good is already predicable; to whom all manner of good is yet certain, if their energy endure...."<sup>73</sup>

In its broadest sense, this hope was based on the present state of British success as Carlyle interpreted it. He extended his belief in the fruits of individual labours to include the achievements of the nation, and saw, even in the complexities of industrialism the present and future good of Britain. In Past and Present he saw that:

"With all its miserable shortcomings, with its wars, controversies, with its trade-unions, famine-insurrections, - it is her Practical Material Work alone that England has to show for herself! This, and hitherto almost nothing more; yet actually this. The grim inarticulate veracity of the English People, unable to speak its meaning in words, has turned itself silently on things; and the

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<sup>73</sup>Ibid., p. 178.

dark powers of Material Nature have answered, "Yes, this at least is true, this is not false!" So answers nature. "Waste desert-shrubs of the Tropical swamps have become Cotton-trees; and here, under my furtherance, are verily woven shirts, - hanging unsold, undistributed, but capable to be distributed, capable to cover the bare backs of my children of men. Mountains, old as the Creation, I have permitted to be bored through; bituminous fuel-stores, the wreck of forests that were green a million years ago, - I have opened them from my secret rock-chambers, and they are yours, ye English. Your huge fleets, steamships, do sail the sea; huge Indias do obey you; from huge New Englands and Antipodal Australias comes profit and traffic to this Old England of mine!" So answers Nature. The Practical Labour of England is not a chimerical Triviality: it is a Fact, acknowledged by all the Worlds; which no man and no demon will contradict. It is, very audibly, though very inarticulately as yet, the one God's Voice we have heard in these two atheistic centuries."<sup>74</sup>

When comparing the two men, in summary, it is obvious that wide discrepancies existed between their beliefs in this regard. Carlyle, while recognizing the evils which accompanied this new era, strove to extract and encourage its potential greatness. In doing so, he aligned industrialism with his own fervent philosophy of works which directed it toward the good of mankind as an ultimate goal.

To Ruskin, on the other hand, the developments which evolved from the industrial revolution were anathemas. The concessions which he made to industrialism did not conceal in fact his antagonism to its growth. Concerned with individual happiness and the ever-present sense of

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<sup>74</sup>Ibid., p. 145.



the past, he was unable to reconcile industry with his ideals. Ruskin, in this instance, owed no debt to Carlyle for inspiration. During the years following Carlyle's most complete expressions of these opinions, Ruskin became more and more firmly convinced of the tragedies which he felt that industrialism was inciting.

CHAPTER V  
CONCLUSION

The aspects in the relationship of the thoughts of Carlyle and Ruskin, which were first examined for evidence of each man's opinion of the other, as well as the critics' views of the closeness of both, presented a number of disparate opinions. Not the least among these were the altered dimensions with which Ruskin, when compared with Carlyle, viewed their friendship.

In their specific judgments of each other, the predominate feeling is unhidden. Ruskin, generally speaking, wrote of Carlyle as his Master and, with only occasional exceptions, called no attention to the differences which existed philosophically between them. Carlyle, on the other hand, appreciated Ruskin for his spirit which alone in England seemed in any way united with his own. Carlyle was aware of faults and deficiencies in his friend and he did not hesitate to express them.

The critics, it was seen, were of no conjoined opinion concerning the relationship of thought between the two authors. Contemporary critics of Carlyle and Ruskin often displayed a natural prejudice towards either man, which, since they were living amid the events being criticized, seems unavoidable and not a factor to be necessarily condemned. Modern critics, however, have likewise separated on their evaluations of the affinity of

thought between Carlyle and Ruskin. In many cases, as well, the analysts of this century have derived their judgments from events in the lives, rather than the actual works, of both authors.

The writings themselves, consequently, were taken as the definitive source in investigating the relationship of thought. The preceding chapter should have made clear, for the most part, the results of the examination. This conclusion, therefore, will cover briefly the broad interpretations which can be drawn from the detailed study of the works of Carlyle and Ruskin.

The sum of the written material of both men showed less agreement than might normally have been assumed from the acknowledged extent of their friendship. In only two of the closely examined areas, those of government and work, was there a genuinely allied and essential concurrence of thought. Art, however, along with the most basic philosophical beliefs of religion and the reward and due to man of happiness, were vital aspects which separated Carlyle from Ruskin to a point where they can never be considered truly as Master and Disciple.

Yet there are bonds which united the two men in the minds of both their readers and their critics, almost as closely, perhaps, as if they had been totally in agreement. These same bonds also promoted and maintained the undoubted friendship between Carlyle and Ruskin, and obliterated

from notice all but the widest variations in belief.

Throughout the age of change and uncertainty in which Carlyle lived, he preached the need of a reformation of the individual. One of the important actions in a man's life should be, he believed, a personal soul-searching in an attempt to establish in one's own mind the truths which one holds concerning life and its meaning and implications. In a performance and understanding of these principles by a few people, their influence would spread to yet more. Ruskin, with an increasing awareness of human problems, which developed in and through his art and architectural studies, became a known and outstanding example of this belief advocated by Carlyle. Ruskin appeared to be a man who was wrestling with the truths of existence; he was one of a very few doing so.

In a study of Schiller, Carlyle expressed the desires which men should seek to fulfil in life. He wrote, with particular reference to Schiller in this instance:

That high purpose after spiritual perfection, which with him was a love of Poetry, and an unwearied active love, is itself, when pure and supreme, the necessary parent of good conduct, as of noble feeling. With all men it should be pure and supreme, for in one or the other shape it is the true end of man's life. Neither in any man is it ever wholly obliterated; with the most, however, it remains a passive sentiment, an idle wish. And even with the small residue of men, in whom it attains some measure of activity, who would be Poets in act or word, how seldom is it the sincere and highest purpose, how seldom unmixed with vulgar ambition, and low,

mere earthly aims, which distort or utterly pervert its manifestations!<sup>1</sup>

Such purity and honesty in intent was exemplified in Ruskin also, and this purpose was a basis for Carlyle's accepting the growth of this close relationship despite the differences which existed between them.

To their audience, Carlyle and Ruskin were linked by the similarity in spirit of their protests against their era. Ruskin primarily followed Carlyle, in respect to the dates of their lives and publications, as the voice crying out against the conditions of England. They were connected more closely, too, by Ruskin's printed acknowledgments to Carlyle as his master.

In the earlier years of his life, Ruskin's utterances were aligned to a greater degree with those of Carlyle. As he aged, Ruskin gradually centered his interests more on specific problems which faced society. In building the road at Oxford, in the tea shop project, in the plans for improved housing for tenants in London, he brought the idea to the stage of application. These ideas culminated in the Guild of St. George which was Ruskin's greatest effort at reformation.

Basically, such developments were not in antipathy to the beliefs of Carlyle; yet the background of reasoning

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<sup>1</sup>Carlyle, Critical and Miscellaneous Essays, Vol. III, "Schiller", pp. 83-4.



which was finalized by the Guild marked a grave and definite division of their ideas. Such divisions had been obvious at other times, but this was one of exceptional prominence. As much as with any factor, Carlyle was disturbed by Ruskin's desire to return to the past rather than altering the present by incorporating the best inheritance from the past with the best features of the present. For with Carlyle,

The true Past departs not, nothing that was worthy in the Past departs; no Truth or Goodness realized by man ever dies, or can die; but is all still here, and recognised or not, lives and works through endless changes. If all things, to speak in the German dialect, are discerned by us, and exist for us, in an element of Time, and therefore of Mortality and Mutability; yet Time itself reposes on Eternity: The truly Great and Transcendental has its basis and substance in Eternity; stands revealed to us as Eternity in a vesture of Time. Thus in all Poetry, Worship, Art, Society, as one form passes into another, nothing is lost: it is but the superficial, as it were the body only, that grows obsolete and dies; under the mortal body lies a soul which is immortal; which anew incarnates itself in fairer revelation; and the Present is the living sum-total of the whole Past.

In change, therefore, there is nothing terrible, nothing supernatural: on the contrary, it lies in the very essence of our lot and life in this world. Today is not yesterday: we ourselves change; how can our Works and Thoughts, if they are always to be the fittest, continue always the same?<sup>2</sup>

Thus, another important contrast had developed which belied

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid., Vol. IV., "Characteristics", p. 34.

the identical nature of their beliefs.

The dissimilarities noted in the examination of their work, in addition to those cited here, reveal the diverging aspects in the relationship of their thought. The concern and the hopes for mankind expressed by Carlyle and Ruskin, however, unite them closely in spirit and establish a valid affinity which overshadows, at heart, the differences in their beliefs and philosophy.

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